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Piaget's Egocentrism and Language Learning: Language Egocentrism (LE) and Language Differentiation (LD)

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***Abstract*—Piaget's theory, which is at the center of cognitive approach and major theoretical foundation in terms of the intelligent development, explains children's language learning by using four stages of cognitive development. For instance, Piaget maintains that Egocentrism is related to language learning as an inner speech and can affect on differentiation in cognitive development. This paper is to focus on the important educational foundation and information, which can prove how Language Egocentrism (LE) and Language Differentiation (LD) have an influence on native and second language acquisition for young children (two to seven years old), and what characteristics can be included in the subcategories of LE and LD.**

***Index Terms*—Language Egocentrism (LE), Language Differentiation (LD), language learning mechanics, second language acquisition, Piaget**

I. Introduction

A cognitive approach to learning and human development emphasizes on mental or internal factors as contrasted with environmental or external factors as many traditional behaviorists. Thinking involves successive adaptation of assimilation and accommodation to an environment and results in the organization of the mental structure or schemata. The interaction of assimilation and accommodation in the process of attaining equilibrium accounts for cognitive development from birth to death (Schiamberg, 1985).

Much of Piaget's works has aided educators in understanding children's cognitive development. His theories in terms of a cognitive realm have greatly influenced on understanding of factors in language learning. In addition, many language theories demonstrate that Egocentrism is the meaningful element relevant to language learning as an inner speech and can impact differentiation in the cognitive development (Mitchell & Myles, 2004; Wadsworth, 1996).

Diverse theories in language learning have been studied through a variety of perspectives such as social factors, social-interaction, psychological elements, cognitive development, age, gender, and so on (Brown, 2000; Cook, 2007; Mitchell & Myles, 2004). Smith (as cited in Mitchell & Myles, 2004) also mentions that some aspects of language might be genetically controlled and related to deficit in cognitive development such as Specific Language Impairment (SLI). For these reasons, many studies and theories that are related to native language learning and second language acquisition have shown that it is very critical to understand significant elements in multiple and diverse perspectives, not in a single factor.

This paper is to focus on the important educational foundation and information that can prove how Language Egocentrism (LE) and Language Differentiation (LD) can affect the native language learning and second language acquisition for young children (2-7 years old), and what characteristics can be included in the sub categories of LE and LD. Furthermore, LE and LD can be reviewed by multiple inner factors such as personality, learning pattern, and inner characteristics.

II. Piaget's Basic Concept

A. Schema

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Piaget uses the word, schema. Schemata (i.e., the plural of schema) are the cognitive or mental structures by which individuals adapt to and organize their environments. Wadsworth (1996) explains that when a child is born, he or she has few schemata and develops his/her schemata gradually, and then it becomes more generalized, differentiated, and "adult". However, Wadsworth (1996) argues that schemata do not have physical counterparts and are not observable. They are inferred to exist and are called as the hypothetical constructs.

B. Adaptation

Assimilation and accommodation are two sides of adaptation. Boeree (2006) describes that assimilation and accommodation work like pendulum swings by advancing our understanding on the world and our competency in them. He also emphasizes that the assimilation is the cognitive process by which a person integrates new perceptual or conceptual information into existing schemata or patterns of behaviors. Furthermore, he suggests that assimilation theoretically does not result in a change of schemata, but it does influence on the growth of schemata and is a part of development.

On the other hand, the accommodation is the creation of new schemata or the modification of old schemata. This process of accommodation is a schema-building or schema-modifying process. It is the process of modifying an action to fit into a new object (Solso, 1995). An infant sucks on a nipple but has to adjust its sucking action in order to drink from a cup. Wadsworth (1996) suggests that once accommodation has taken place, a child can try again to assimilate the stimulus because the structure has changed.

C. Process of Intellectual Organization

When a child realizes differences between new and old schema, he/she loses balance or equilibrium because new concept does exist in his/her schema (Small, 1990). For example, in a little Suzy story, Suzy realizes that a two-wheeled bike is different from the tricycle. She must work to accommodate the new bicycle information by constructing a new schema for bicycle. She can assimilate the new information into her newly constructed bicycle schema. Once Suzy has constructed new schema and assimilated bicycle riding into it, she has attained balance and is once again in equilibrium.

III. Stage of Cognitive Development

A. Sensorimotor Stage (Birth-2 Years Old)

As the name implies, the infant in a sensorimotor stage uses senses and motor abilities to understand the world (Hughes, 2001). A baby may suck their thumb. That feels good, so he/she sucks some more. The infant's behavior is largely reflexive and undifferentiated. These basic reflexes with the infant are sucking, grasping, crying, and moving his/her arms, trunk, and head. The more sophisticated sucking schema exists when permitting differentiation (Huitt & Hummel, 2003). In addition, a child begins the transition between the sensorimotor level of intelligence and representational intelligence in the sensorimotor stage (Kodat, 2002). Representation allows a child to find objects that are hidden by invisible displacement. Around one and a half, a child is clearly developing the mental representation that is the ability to hold an image in his/her mind. Two years after birth, the child is beginning to talk (i.e., symbolic representation), has clearly evolved intellectual operations, and is beginning to think (Wadsworth, 1996).

B. Preoperational Stage (2-7 Years Old)

During preoperational development intelligence, a child evolves from a sensorimotor intelligence to a representational intelligence. In this stage, the child is able to use symbols and language. A drawing, a written word, or a spoken word comes to understand in order to represent a real object. Along with symbolization, there is a clear understanding of past and future. In this stage, obstacles to logical thought are egocentrism, transformational reasoning, reversibility, and conservation (Taylor, 1996). Egocentrism can make different forms at different levels of development, but is always characterized by a lack of differentiation in their thoughts (Doran & Cowan, 1975). Another characteristic of preoperational child's thinking is his/her inability to reason successfully about transformations. The child in the preoperational stage is not able to mentally reverse mentally the act of lengthening (Brown, 2000).

C. Concrete Operations Stage (7-11 Years Old)

In this stage, children not only can use symbols, but also can manipulate these symbols logically to solve problems. By six or seven years old, most children develop the ability to conserve number, length and liquid volume. Conservation means that a quantity remains the same despite changes in appearance of objects. In addition, a child learns classification and seriation during this stage (Hughes, 2001). Classification and seriation are important logics to solve the basic arithmetic in a school. The concrete operations stage can be viewed as a transition between pre-logical thought and complete logical thought of older children who have attained formal operations stage.

D. Formal Operations Stage (11 Years Old and Up)

In this stage, a child constructs the reasoning and logics to solve all problems (Huitt & Hummel, 2003). Concrete operational children have difficulties in reasoning on complex verbal problems such as propositions, hypothetical problems, or the future. Formal operations are characterized by scientific reasoning and hypothetical reasoning, and reflect a highly developed understanding of causation. On the other hand, formal operations stage is not accomplished

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by all children (Kodat, 2002). For instance, several studies have concluded that no more than half the American population develops all the possibilities of formal operations (Kohlberg, 1981). Furthermore, data from adolescent populations presented that only 30 to 35% of high school seniors approach the formal operations stage (as cited in Huitt & Hummel, 2003).

For this paper, authors will focus on young children who are aged from two to seven years old and in their preoperational stage.

IV. Egocentrism and Language Learning

A. *Egocentrism in Piaget's Cognitive Development*

Egocentrism can take different forms at different levels of development, but is always characterized by a lack of differentiation in thoughts (Wadsworth, 1996). Therefore, young children take into account discrepancies between their own knowledge and information of peers in their early cognitive development.

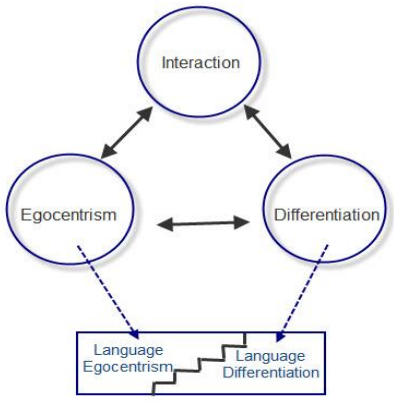

Figure 1. Relationship between Egocentrism and Differentiation

For instance, Wadsworth (1996) holds that the sensorimotor child is initially egocentric in that he/she lacks differentiation between the self as an object and other objects. It has shown that the preoperational child initially is unable to differentiate between thoughts of others and his/her own thoughts. In figure 1, egocentrism, differentiation, and interaction are closely related, and these egocentric thoughts of children in a preoperational stage would be diminishing with augment of interaction and cognitivity, while differential thought is rising in concrete and formal stages of children.

Doran and Cowan (1975) suggest that a measure of peer interaction is not correlated with any of several measures of egocentrism (e.g., spatial egocentrism, communication egocentrism, or role taking skill) and conclude that egocentrism is not a unitary variable, while Piaget (as cited in Doran & Cowan, 1975) suggests that one of the most important environmental factors leading to the diminishing of egocentrism is related to the interaction of a child with his/her peers. In addition, Deutsch (1974) finds a relationship between peer interaction and communication egocentrism in preschool children.

Essentially, Egocentrism can be viewed as an internal learning mechanism, and it has a much more central role to play in learning language with a variety of interactions (Egocentrism, 2009; Schwartz, Maynard, & Uzelac, 2008). In addition, a child with a high level of logical thoughts or differentiation does not mean that he/she would use a low egocentrism in his/her language learning. The egocentrism in language learning does not mean that it is a reverse proportional to the level of differentiation, and does not have any advanced stages such as a Piaget's cognitive development. In other words, egocentrism or differentiation can be viewed as a dominant learning tendency (or learning mechanism) for students in language learning and second language acquisition.

B. *Language Egocentrism (LE) and Language Differentiation (LD)*

Wadsworth (1996) maintains that early preoperational thought is dominated by presence or absence of Piaget's concepts: egocentrism, reservation, transformation, and reversibility. In addition, obstacles to logical thoughts are egocentrism, transformations, centration, and reversibility (Wadsworth, 1996). Meanwhile, the competence of egocentrism in this preoperational stage can permit a child to absorb information, knowledge or language around him/her.

Rycek, Stuhr, McDermott, Benker, and Swartz (1998) find that females have higher levels of egocentrism than do males in their adolescent research. Many substantial researchers present higher verbal ability in normally achieving females and higher visual-spatial and mathematical abilities in normally achieving males (Hyde, Fennema & Lamon,

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1990; Vogel, 1990). Younger children and females can get higher level of egocentrism with dominant learning mechanism of LE when compared with adults and males who possess higher level of reasoning in language learning. Therefore, LE can be referred to as a critical innate learning tendency and mechanism belonging to Egocentrism that helps children in their language learning.

In figure 2, it can be critical to define and analyze important elements of LE based on a wide variety of research related to Piaget's Egocentrism in language learning, and then these elements can be used to explain the definition of LE in the area of the first and second language acquisition. The dichotomous factors of LE and LD also can have influence on the learning of nature and second language, and can be viewed as a dominant or inferior tendency in the area of language learning. Whereas, Piaget's theory explains that the degree of Egocentrism is reversely proportional to a development of reasoning for children. As a result, LE and LD co-exist and interact in the same inner realm as a dominant or inferior tendency.

The concept of LE is based on diverse inner elements that are representative for young children's characteristics in language learning. Furthermore, LE can be related more closely to initial learning tendency or pattern in a language learning and acquisition, in which a child would use a private speech, imitation, and modeling to learn a language (Tucker, 2003). In contrast, LD can be related to diverse learning tendencies such as language ego, reasoning, and interaction, which students acquire in a cognitive development and maturity.

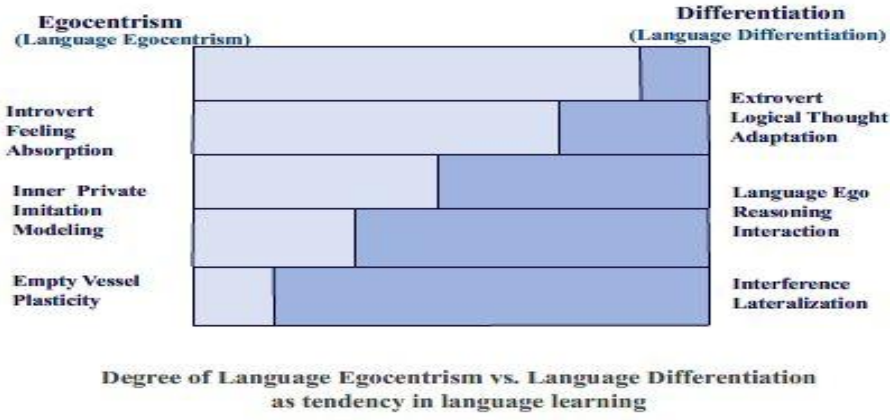

Figure 2. LE versus LD

In figure 2, young children and adolescents hold both LE and LD in language learning tendency (Barr & Keysar, 2004). They can construct dominant tendencies from multiple sub-areas of LE and LD, and the degree of dominant tendencies can be affected by multiple inner factors such as age, gender, and personality. For example, adolescent egocentrism can be explained by multiple dimensions, not by a single perspective (Muuss, 1982; Schwartz, Maynard & Uzelac, 2008). Therefore, it is necessary to explain LE with sub- categories in order to observe diverse dimensions in terms of Egocentrism. This paper explains that LE and LD could include three sub categories: Personality, Learning Pattern, and Inner Characteristics.

C. Perspective of Personality

Brown (2000) maintains that if we were to devise theories on second language acquisition or teaching methodologies that are based only on cognitive considerations, we would be omitting the most fundamental side of human behavior. He also explains that systematic study for the role of personality in second language acquisition has already led to the greater understanding of the language learning process and to improved language teaching designs.

Cook (2007) also explains that some researchers have investigated the familiar division between extrovert and introvert personalities that could have an influence on language learning in terms of learning style preference. For instance, a child who tends to use LE might be related to introvert characteristics using feeling and absorption in affective concepts. On the other hand, a child who has a tendency of LD might be classified as an extrovert tendency student using logical thought and adaptation in his/her language learning.

LE can be an initial booster in language learning and language acquisition for young children when compared with LD. In addition, a child, who uses LE more than LD, tends to use feeling and absorption with sticking to his/her introvert tendency in language learning. On the other hand, a child who has tendency for LD is likely to use logical thoughts and adaption. As a result, the first sub category of LE versus LD can be explained by affective and logical perspectives that are based on the innate domain in a dichotomous style. For example, a child with dominant tendency of LE presents stronger introvert feeling and absorption than extrovert energy, logical thought, and adaptation in terms of sub-categories of personality.

D. Perspective of Learning Pattern

Children in the concrete/operations stage are expected to apply logical learning patterns by developing reasoning and

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social interaction. Meanwhile, there might be deteriorating primitive learning methods (or talents), such as absorption, imitation, and modeling because they apply more logical methods because of deterioration of Egocentrism. In this period, diverse learning patterns of LE and LD can coexist in children's learning.

Piaget (as cited in Doran & Cowan, 1975) presents that young children are well known to engage in a private speech, and this speech has been interpreted as an evidence for children's egocentrism. Furthermore, Vygotsky (as cited in Mitchell & Myles, 2004) explains that private speech eventually becomes inner speech with a use of language to regulate internal thoughts. In addition, Solso (1995) explains that Piaget believed that a child uses egocentric speech with self-centered tendency and Vygotsky suggested that Egocentric speech of children seems to be a result of external interaction.

On the other hand, learning patterns related to LD can increasingly affect and interrupt students' language learning. For instance, Brown (2000) explains that 'language ego' means a self-esteem that maintains walls of inhibition to protect a weak or fragile ego, or a lack of self-confidence. Guiora, Beit-Hallami, Brannon, Dull, and Scovel (as cited in Brown, 2000) conclude that less defensive or adaptive language ego promotes the pronunciation ability in a second language in Thai. In other words, learning patterns of LD can also make a negative role as interference relevant to a language ego when adults learn their second languages.

As a result, learning patterns can be changed and complicated with deterioration of egocentrism and augment of differentiation. Moreover, the dominant tendency of LE pattern means that children and adolescents are likely to be familiar with primitive learning methods such as private speech, imitation, and modeling with low language ego.

E. Perspective of Inner Characteristics

Tucker (2003) holds that cognitive development of adults hinders second language learning, and leads to a tendency to overanalyze. Cook (2007) also suggests that the apparent decline of adults' language learning is connected with physical factors such as the loss of plasticity in a brain and lateralization of a brain. Therefore, these different emotional and physical changes can make adults unable to regain the egocentric elements of their childhood.

In the education ideology, intellectual factors of children are considered by cultural transmission and academic rationalism that view children as "empty vessels" (Dello' Olio & Donk, 2007; Kohlberg, 1981). In the dominant tendency of LE, inner characteristics of empty vessels imply that there is an inner status of plasticity with absence of interference related to logical thoughts. On the contrary, dominant tendency of differentiation on inner characteristics means that children and adolescents lose "plasticity" in the brain with strong interference related to logical thoughts and abstract mode of thinking.

In summary, it is very crucial concept that language-learning tendencies can be demonstrated by dichotomous elements of LE and LD in the three sub-categories that can affect tendencies of language learning. In addition, different lines of figure 2 between LE and LD represent that dominant tendency of language learning between LE and LD can be changeable according to diverse elements in three subcategories and multiple perspectives such as age, gender, personality, and educational status (Muuss, 1982; Peterson & Roscoe, 1991; Rycek et al., 1998; Schwatz et al., 2008). In addition, Rycek et al. (1998) explain that the level of egocentrism which is inversely proportional to reasoning should be changeable and should not be fixed by cognitive stages even in the post formal stage of adolescent in their adolescent egocentrism research. In other words, dominant tendencies between LE and LD can be changeable and co-existed.

F. Role of LE and LD in Language Learning Stages

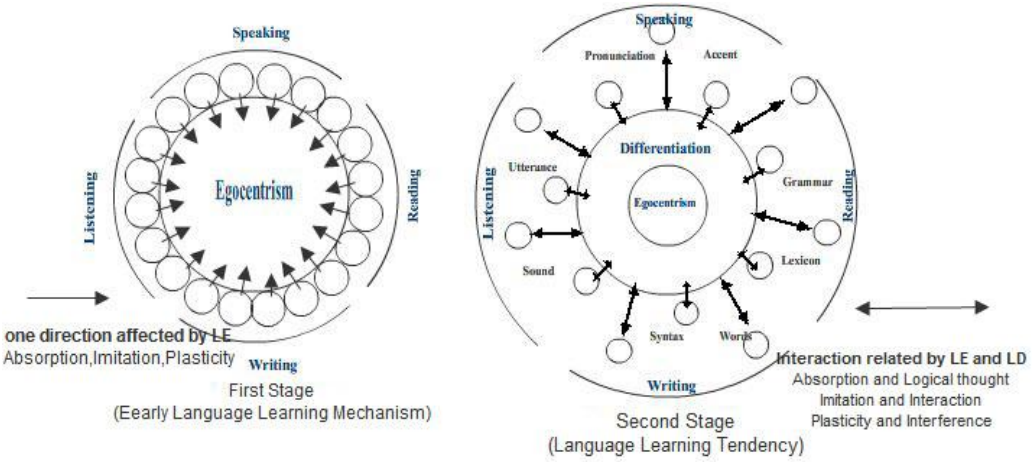

Figure 3. Language Egocentrism Stages

Figure 3 shows that there are two stages for LE status; the early language learning mechanism and language learning tendency. The first stage is similar to the Piaget's preoperational stage since young children are perfectly affected by LE without characteristics of LD or with a little amount of interference of it. A child in this stage is very egocentric and

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affected by elements of language egocentrism such as introvert energy, absorption, imitation, and plasticity.

In the first stage, the LE is a core that has no interference related to logical thoughts and language ego. Therefore, LE in the first stage can be considered to have one direction that can make young children absorb language as a sponge with characteristics of imitation and plasticity, and direct absorption of language.

While the first stage of early language learning mechanism can be explained in the preoperational stage of Piaget's theory, the second stage of language learning tendency can be related to the concrete and formal stages (Atherton, 2005). Children in the concrete and formal operations stages can make critical interaction between LE and LD. Children might build up their own language tendencies affected by LE and LD. For example, a child who presents a dominant tendency of LE is likely to use a private speech with interaction of low interference of language ego in language pattern. In other words, children in the stage of language learning tendency would not directly acquire language, but are in a status that has a dynamic interaction related to LE and LD.

As a result, it is concluded that effective learning mechanisms can be connected with learning mechanisms of young children who use dominantly characteristics of LE in early language mechanism. For example, Barr and Keysar (2004) conclude that language users are very egocentric and use egocentric ways in their language-learning environments.

In the second stage of language learning tendency, critical interferences of LD can slow down language acquisition to children with dominant tendency of LD because they can play a role as walls to interfere directly absorbing language and acquiring second language.

These facts can indicate that a language-learning environment will be more relevant to egocentric cognition and tendency than logical structure. LE can be considered to have a positive influence on language learning to children in dominant or second tendency with interaction affected by LE and LD.

V. Implications

Piaget's theory describes cognitive structures and language learning in terms of four stages of cognitive development. In the second preoperational stage, a child is egocentric in that he/she lacks differentiation between the self as an object and other objects. In the concrete operational stage and formal operations stage, a child can develop his/her logical thoughts, and keep developing higher levels of logical thinking and reasoning with deteriorating Egocentrism. In the language learning, Piaget (as cited in Doran & Cowan, 1975) suggests that Egocentrism affects language learning for young children, and is an early learning mechanism related to inner or private speech to regulate internal thoughts. Egocentrism is likely to be a critical booster for the early language learning and is critical factor in the cognitive development with differentiation.

In the Piaget's theory, Egocentrism can be explained as a critical obstacle that hinders children's logical thoughts. Piaget suggests that Egocentrism is related to language learning as an inner speech (Mitchell & Myles, 2004; Wadsworth, 1996). In addition, diverse theories in language learning have continued to be studied through a wild variety of perspectives including Egocentrism (Barr & Keysar, 2004; Brown, 2000; Cook, 2007; Mitchell & Myles, 2004). Therefore, language-learning tendencies between LE and LD can be referred to as a critical multiple- mechanism to understand children's language learning.

This paper puts a critical emphasis on the fact that dominant tendencies of language learning between LE and LD can be changeable and flexible in terms of age, gender, personality, and encounter of new knowledge. For example, reemergence and enhancement of egocentrism during the college experience can be an effective inner mechanism that let them adjust to a new educational environment, and achieve a variety of academic knowledge.

Finally, it is required to study the more effective learning methods such as how to improve LE as an early language mechanism, and how to reduce interferences related to logical thoughts and language ego. Therefore, children might be able to enhance tendencies of LE by exhilarating elements of LE such as absorption, inner private, imitation, and plasticity in a language learning.

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Translation in Teaching a Foreign (Second) Language: A Methodological Perspective

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***Abstract*—This paper discusses the *act of translating* between mother tongue and second/foreign language as a potentially effective way to improve learners' second/foreign language. The author first examines the history of 'translation' as a methodology in second/foreign language teaching. The author then provides arguments in favour of including the methodology in SL/FL teaching in the current post-cognitive paradigm. The paper limits its theoretical perspective of the methodology to advanced level learners, and emphasises that the *act of translating* can create ideal learning opportunities with positive L1 use in SL/FL learning. The *act of translating* is a holistic activity, which immediately compels the learners to pay more attention to the SL/FL text, which encourages their awareness of form and meaning in context and improves their reading and writing skills in SL/FL. The methodology further enhances learners' general skills of *noticing* and observing details of the linguistic systems, cultures, and societies of L1 and SL/FL, in order to deliver the messages between the two languages. This can expand the SL/FL learning to beyond the classroom.**

***Index Terms*—foreign/second language learning, translation, post-communicative, cognitive paradigm, second language comprehension, teaching methodology**

I. Introduction

As Cook (2007) pointed out, 'translation in language learning' is an overlooked field in second language acquisition (SLA) for several reasons. Firstly, it has been difficult to shake off the old connection of translation to authoritarian teaching method. Translation in SLA has been seen as rather negative following criticism of grammar-translation methods. Secondly, translation is considered often as the goal for, or the end product of, teaching but rarely seen as a means of or catalyst for language learning. Thus, whereas a reasonable amount of literature is available regarding teaching translation as the end itself, research into translation as a means of or catalyst for language learning is scarce.

When people see or hear any language not known to them, they may naturally try to identify it (asking what language it is or what the word or sentence means) or they may just ignore the word or sentence (either not recognising or being uninterested in it). The very act of identifying a language unit in a second/foreign language (SL/FL) and assigning meaning to it, involves the *act of translating.* Their knowledge/cognition is built in their first language (L1). In other words, ideas and meaning are attached to particular language use or expression of L1, or new ideas or meanings can be constructed from them. Thus, when people try to understand ideas or meaning in a new SL/FL language, L1 will naturally play a major role in your comprehension.

This paper first examines how the once very dominant translation method has given a way to other methodologies in the practice of second/foreign language (SL/FL) teaching. Following that, it discusses how the *act of translating*, using translation as a means of learning, can effectively promote (advanced) learners' second/foreign language acquisition in the current post-communicative, cognitive paradigm of learning. The discussion first examines arguments for the *act of translating* methodology from theoretical view points. It highlights that the methodology 1) promotes positive use of learners' L1, 2) uses errors in language output to assist a higher cognitive development, 3) provides ideal opportunities to focus on form (FonF: e.g., Doughty & Williams, 1998; Long, 1991), 4) increases *intake* of available input, 5) encourages advanced learners to improve their reading and writing skills, 6) spurs the learners to go beyond their Interlanguage (IL) environment and connect to the actual world of L1 and SL/FL (Machida, 1996), 7) provides a holistic activity to bridge the gap between learners' L1 and SL/FL, and 8) enhances learners' sensitivity to language, culture and society . The paper then explores the effective use of the methodology in the second/foreign language classroom.

II. In Early Days of SL/FL Learning and Teaching

A. Translation as the Major Approach

Translation as a method in teaching second/foreign language has a long history. In the 16th century, when teaching Greek to Latin speakers or vice versa, translation was the popular method (Bowen, Madsen, & Hilferty, 1985, p.15). Translation became the major method for the target language (SL/FL) teaching in the 19th century (named as G-T paradigm), where translation was used to *understand* and *learn* grammatical usage in the target language (SL/FL) by

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providing *meaning* (mother tongue translation). With its focus on learning grammar rules and vocabulary, and deductive L2 learning, the methodology used inauthentic, artificial or manufactured SL/FL translation from L1 to introduce the L2 grammatical targets. The approach tended to exclude listening and speaking activities. It also induced a false impression that fixed word to word, or phrase to phrase, translation is possible between L1 and L2. The arrival of the Natural Method movement towards the end of the 19th century "challenged the value of translation (i.e., *pivotal use of L1 in teaching L2*) and the efficiency of formal grammar study" (Bowen, Madsen, & Hilferty, 1985, p. 20).

B. Decreased L1 Use in FL/L2 Classroom

The Direct Method, *teach L2 in L2*[1], disfavoured use of L1 (translation) to facilitate learning in FL classes. Instead, class hours were devoted to teacher-student interactions in FL to increase FL use. The "*input before output*" approach also placed listening prior to speaking, emphasising an oral-aural approach at the early stage of FL learning. The Direct Method evolved into its offspring Audiolingualism. By the time Audiolingual methods such as ASTP (Army Specialised Training Program) swept the world of second language teaching in the mid-20th century, the emphasis in foreign language teaching had *shifted from written to spoken language*. The habit-forming approach (behaviourism) based on analysis of the surface structure was challenged by the *cognitive, generative approach* (e.g., Chomsky, 1959, 1965). Chomsky argued that children cannot learn a language simply through exposure to language input naturally available around them. In order to generate and create words and sentences, they must be born with some innate language acquisition device (LAD). This theory has influenced SLA since.

The arrival of communicative approaches in second/foreign language teaching saw emphasis placed on *meaningful input in L2* (exposure to L2 in realistic situations) and a *naturalistic approach* (approximating children's L1 learning). Innovative approaches such as the Natural Approach (emphasis on input: e.g., Krashen & Terrell, 1983), TPR (Asher: delay verbal response: e.g. 1982), Suggestopedia (Lozanov: tap learners' latent ability: 1982), and Silent Way (communication with little vocabulary and more utterances from the learners: Gattegno, 1982), were introduced into SL/FL teaching. As a result, teaching explicit linguistic forms and use of the L1were avoided in teaching. The Communicative Approach also has received criticism. For example, exposure to meaningful input alone (i.e., natural language leaning) does not develop learners with competence essential for communication. In the Communicative paradigm, the notional/functional syllabus (presenting language under notional and functional categories) emphasised *language as a tool of communication* in L2 teaching. It used functional equivalence between the first and second languages, not word to word or linguistic similarity, to teach the second language. Since communicative tasks are designed to achieve functional goals such as greeting, asking directions, etc (e.g., comprehensive input: Swain, 1985), outcomes from the tasks tend to lack grammatical correctness. Thus, a communicative approach alone may also have limitations in teaching or learning academic or professional language, not providing opportunities to develop accuracy in language use (Hinkel & Fotos, 2002). The approach was also not able to serve as a basis which learners can apply to generate more expressions (e.g., Brumfit, 1981; R. Ellis, 2002).

III. Language Teaching in Post-communicative, Cognitive Paradigm

In recent years, the necessity for integration of explicit instruction into communicative approaches has become obvious. N. Ellis (1996) suggested that grammar teaching can enhance learner proficiency and accuracy and assist learners to acquire the syntactic system of the language. Brown (1994) and Larsen-Freeman (1991) discuss the need for grammar teaching along with communicative tasks. Doughty and Williams (1998) discuss how 'focus on form' instruction should be integrated into language teaching. The Focus on Form approach combines traditional synthetic grammar teaching (form without context or discourse: 'formS-focused') with an analytic approach requiring context where the learners are engaged in communication. This involves negotiating meaning in a set linguistic and non-linguistic context ('FonF instruction'), including overtly focusing on particular grammatical/linguistic units (e.g., gender distinction: Harley, 1998), generating metalinguistic discussion (metatalk) using dictogloss tasks (Swain, 1998), and more implicitly, attention shifting to forms during communication (*learner-initiated* and resulting in *noticing*: Long & Robinson, 1998).

Language use has also become to be seen as a more *holistic activity*. Language is not only understood as a communication instrument, but also reflects the context in which it is used, such as speakers' own culture, and the sociolinguistic nature of the context (e.g., Niemeir, 2004). Constructivism, the concept currently pervasive in the educational field, sees that individual learners construct knowledge for themselves. Learning is a personal process (Allen, 2004). A Constructivist approach to learning emphasizes authentic, challenging projects. They should incorporate learners' experience outside of the classroom (therefore, they are meaningful to the learners), and be set in problem solving contexts, involving peers and teacher (expert) in the learning community. Through interaction and negotiation in the learning community, learners construct knowledge (cognitive construction), and the problem-solving nature of the projects demands higher cognitive processes (Newell & Simon, 1972) such as reflecting on the problem and/or their own learning and searching for solutions (refer to Cunningham et al., 1993, for more details).

1 In this paper, second /foreign language (SL/FL) or second /foreign language learning (S/FLA) refers to second language or foreign language learning in the class room. Whichever the way, once the learners acquire the language, it is treated as L2 (second language after L1).

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Cognitive processing during SL/FL comprehension and learning has been discussed for the last three decades. Unlike autonomous processes of perception/understanding, problem solving and thinking are "under conscious control and resource demanding" (Kintsch, 1998, p.3). Text comprehension is controlled by memory, both working memory (WM) and long term memory (LTM) (e.g., Macaro, 2003; N. Ellis, 2001; Doughty, 2001). Text comprehension involves surface code, textbase, and situated model (Kintsch, 1998), and text is processed through both bottom-up and top-down processes (interactive models: e.g., McClelland, 1986; Rumelhart,1976; Dechant, 1991). Text comprehension is seen as a process of making meaning of text (i.e., into an orderly conceptual structure). Idea units are propositions of a text, whose relations are directly derived from the text (textbase) and from learners' knowledge and experience retrieved from long term memory (LTM). Idea units are temporarily stored in working memory (WM), and then undergo a constraint-satisfaction or integration process (construction-integration theory: Kintsch, 1988).

L1 use in SL/FL instruction has been re-evaluated and now is seen as potentially beneficial rather than harmful (e.g., the Direct Method: L2 should be taught in L2, Audiolingualism: L2 pattern drills without L1 instruction, Natural Approach: exposure to L2). According to the current view of vocabulary storage in the brain (Macaro, 2003), bilinguals access one common storage system containing both L1 and L2 vocabulary. L1 is considered to assist learners' comprehension (e.g., in cognitive process models such as the Connectionist model: Macaro, 2003) by creating more networks between nodes (ideational representation and words) in their LTM.

In this post-communicative, cognitive paradigm, this paper examines '*acts of translating'* in S/FLA. The argument in this paper is limited to translation as means of language learning/teaching, and thus excludes translation as the end itself. The following section will explore the application of '*act of translating*' as a methodology in F/SLA and discuss its potential contribution to language learning.

IV. Applying Translation (Act of Translation) to the SL/FL Classroom as a New Approach

A. Theoretical Supports

Past methodologies are neither perfect nor complete for language learning. The author provides arguments in favour of including '*act of translating*' into SL/FL courses in the context of the current post-communicative, cognitive language learning paradigm. In this paper, the author limits the arguments to advanced language classes.

Firstly, introducing *act of translating* into SL/FL class promotes positive use of the learners' L1 and knowledge and experience in their SL/FL learning. L1 use in SL/FL learning was banned in the Direct Method, which emphasised SL/FL input and naturalness and fluency in SL/FL. However, it appears that the ban, at the same time, prevented the learners from proactively utilising their knowledge and previous experience built with L1 (LTM). In the past, some methods employed cognitive approaches without L1 use (e.g., Suggestopedia: Lozanov, 1982; and Silent Way: Gattegno, 1982). Community Learning (Curran, 1972) allowed counsellors' use of L1 (interpreting) to create an optimal learning environment.

According to the current Connectionist view (e.g., Cummins, 1976; Libben, 2000), a bilingual person's knowledge and experience appears to be kept as nodes likely containing ideational information, L1 and L2 word representation, and complex connections among them in a common storage of LTM. When a learner progresses in S/FLA, he/she establishes more direct connections between ideational information (meaning) and the SL/FL word representation (form). Throughout SL/FL acquisition the learner repeatedly encounters new and old lexical forms, and thereby develops more complex connections which include tagged language as well as non-language specific connections.

Language learners naturally translate between L1 and SL/FL constantly (Widdowson, 2003; Cook, 2007). Asking learners to translate in class between their SL/FL and L1 not only embraces this natural tendency but also promotes the *act of translating* for the learners to learn SL/FL. When the learners translate wrongly or inappropriately, they at least notice some connections need adjustment even if they cannot see exactly what is missing or to be adjusted. Being advanced learners, they can pay more focused attention to those marked items when they appear in text again (Schmidt, 2001). In other words, instead of working on eradicating errors in language output each time (as in AudioLingual pattern practice), *act of translating* uses errors to its advantage by working at a higher cognitive level -- language system level.

Translation activities also offer golden opportunities for language learning in terms of focus on form (FonF) theory (e.g., Doughty & Williams, 1998; Long, 1991). The *act of translating*, by its nature, requires very careful attention to both form and meaning in the source language in order to 'transfer' the meaning into other forms in another language. When learners are translating, they can see what makes sense and what doesn't. When their comprehension or production in SL/FL doesn't make sense to them, they can go into details of the language. For example, they may explore not only words, but sub-word level such as morphology, or beyond words and sentences, and their inquiry may extend to non-linguistic, cultural issues. Translation activities set up learning circumstances which generate cognitive processes (*noticing*, hypothesis forming and testing, and metatalk) which enable learners to acquire new and consolidate existing knowledge (Swain & Lapkin, 1995).

Thus, translation activities may result in 'available input' in class learning being more effectively converted to *intake* by learners. For example, translating from L2 to L1, the learner needs to take three steps, a) to comprehend in L2, b) to search for the equivalent expressions in L1, and c) then to synthesize them to recapture the *meaning* of the original L2 text in L1. This is an ideal situation from a constructivist viewpoint: an authentic, challenging project which calls upon

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the learners' experience beyond the classroom, provides rich problem-solving opportunities, and ignites interesting communication among the participants, peers and teacher.

In addition, *act of translating* encourages already advanced SL/FL learners to further their reading and writing skills in SL/FL. Once learners reach an advanced level, they comprehend and talk fluently but their reading and writing still lag behind native speakers (e.g., cannot skim as fast as in L1: Taillefer, 1996). Their writing demonstrates mismatched styles and registers (Campbell, 1998), even though there are hardly any overt grammatical errors. Reading activities involving *act of translating* assist advanced learners to improve their reading and writing skills, since *act of translating* naturally focuses learners' attention more on a) detailed sentence form and b) discourse structures, and assists learners to develop metalinguistic knowledge/awareness and metacognitive skills.

Translation into another language requires thorough comprehension of the original text first. SL/FL learners are often trained to read SL/FL text using strategies to compensate for the gap between SL/FL and their interlanguage systems. The learners usually either read for particular tasks such as answering questions in class (either in L1 or SL/FL), or read in detail limited length semi-authentic text with gloss for learning vocabulary and revising learnt language expressions. These reading exercises involve only classroom learners and the teacher as participants/audience for the activities. However translation involves an assumed audience outside of the classroom, i.e. monolingual L1 or SL/FL speakers. This context of translation puts 'SL/FL reading activities' in a different perspective.

Translating from L1 to SL/FL (the reversed *act of translating*) may also promote the learners' SL/FL acquisition. When writing in SL/FL from scratch, the learners write their essays within their interlanguage (IL). They may use IL system based strategies such as 'generalisation' and 'systematic construction' (IL resource expansion strategies: Machida, 1996) to realise their intention in SL/FL. At other times they may paraphrase or simplify the L1 message (IL based achievement strategy use: Færch & Kasper, 1983) so that they manage to locate 'the equivalence' within their existing SL/FL system.

When asked to translate from L1 to SL/FL, the learners pay closer attention and even analyse the original text in L1, and often seek assistance outside of their own SL/FL resources to fill the gap between the message and their SL/FL competency. They may resort to dictionaries to find lexicon, fellow learners to discuss the text, the teacher in class to consult with, or even websites or books to obtain more information about the topic of the text and/or to make up for lack of background knowledge. With this expansion of learning (through interaction with different resources), advanced learners develop their SL/FL further, extending their learning beyond the classroom.

The *act of translating* is a process filling the gap between the two languages of the learners, namely their L1 and SL/FL. The *act of translating* between L1 and SL/FL requires the learners to work with two not equally developed languages. To translate between them, the less developed language needs to be developed further to meet the linguistic, cognitive, social and cultural systems of the other fully developed language. Thus, the *act of translating* demands the learners not only develop their SL/FL linguistic system by learning new lexicon, etc., but also learn non-linguistic conceptual knowledge (e.g., coherence) and more rhetorical structures, and research more subject matter and background knowledge (contextual knowledge). Translating from SL/FL also provides opportunities for the learners to not only 'comprehend' the language (extract messages from the text) but also 'experience' the language used not in a vacuum but in culturally and socially defined situations. In short, *act of translating* expands SL/FL learning, both through development of the language, metalinguistic awareness and metacognitive skills (planning, monitoring and execution), and study of the culture and society to which the SL/FL belongs. *Act of translating* requires analysing how people communicate in a different language very closely. This process of *holistic* learning will almost certainly open up the learner's mind to a wider range and deeper levels of input, whose relevance increases the likelihood of intake.

Lastly, the "linguistic, social and cultural sensitivity" acquired through *act of translating* as part of second language learning can enhance the learners' *noticing* and observing details of the linguistic system in L1 and SL/FL. In addition, discovery of similarities and differences in the ways L1 and SL/FL label and dissect the world will educate advanced learners in the role of perspective in meaning and of syntax in conceptualisation. Through translation activities, learners are able to recognize 'the human mind is *mediated'* (Vygotsky, 1978), and to witness how language reflects 'reality'.

B. Classroom Application

Including *act of translating* into advanced level SL/FL classes is likely to promote SL/FL learning. Translation is one of the oldest methodologies in SL/FL teaching. The current post-communicative, cognitive paradigm of language learning supports the *act of translating* between L1 and SL/FL, to promote SL/FL acquisition with the aid of L1. The inclusion of translation activities naturally provides plentiful opportunities for the learners to pay attention to the relationships between form and meaning. The *act of translating* should stimulate advanced learners to learn more about the language, and assist with bridging the gap between their L1 and SL/FL. The experience of *act of translating* should contribute to the learners not only to *noticing* and observing the linguistic systems in L1 and SL/FL, but also how the two languages convey messages or express reality and the world.

The questions to be considered are 1) to what extent can the methodology be used in SL/FL class and/or 2) what specific language and other targets can be most effectively learnt or taught by using *act of translating* approach in each SL/FL learning situation?

The strengths of the methodology, *act of translating* assist advanced SL/FL learners' reading comprehension and vocabulary building, particularly while the learners are also expected to achieve a better understanding of the SL/FL

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language written systems. It can also be effective to raise learner awareness of two different language systems at the onset of the SL/FL learning. At the beginners' level, *act of translating* might be employed to contrast L1 and SL/FL, and demonstrate how often word-to-word translation will not work to comprehend or construct a speech or passage. The more distance between their L1 and SL/FL, the more the learners are expected to recognise that the SL/FL will organise ideas and thoughts differently from their L1. Up to intermediate levels, the learners are approximating their IL to SL/FL.

Once learners reach advanced level, *act of translating* can be used adjust or fine tune their IL into L2. For example, when the learners are required to translate a SL/FL text into L1, they read the text differently from when their end task for the reading is to answer some comprehension questions or fill-in-the gap type exercises. The task guides or regulates the learners' reading. While comprehension questions and exercises provide some framework for the learners' text reading, the translation task demands the learners' close attention to both immediate and overall structure of the text. The learner needs to check vocabulary they do not understand to look for propositions in the text. To understand propositions, the learners consciously search sentence subjects, verbs, objects, etc at the same time. The learners also constantly hypothesize what the text is about and call on their previous knowledge or schema to understand its rhetorical structure.

Translation into L1 requires learners to restate their comprehension of the SL/FL. The learners may require intensive and extensive linguistic, social and cultural interpretation to complete their translation. Through the process, the learners consolidate relationships between their SL/FL experiences and their cognitive network (L1 based knowledge) and integrate SL/FL into their (L1) understanding of the world. Their resultant translation work may sometimes not be adequate. Error corrections or feedback to the individuals on the inadequate parts of their translation provide opportunities for the advanced learners to learn about the SL/FL, and its society and culture in relation to the learners' own, as well as to move their IL towards L2.

The author has witnessed that it is still hard to build vocabulary even though SL/FL learners' IL has advanced a fair way. The *act of translating* can assist advanced learners by bringing attention to contextual use of vocabulary. The learners may have acquired a sizeable amount of SL/FL vocabulary. Nevertheless, they often lack depth in their understanding of SL/FL vocabulary with little to insufficient awareness of lexical inter-relationships. As a result, the learners still overgeneralise one contextual meaning of a word to any use of the same word in different contexts, or simplify the meaning of SL/FL word by equating it to an L1 word, instead of developing more sophisticated relationships among SL/FL words. Bringing translation from SL/FL to L1, into the class uses their knowledge (L1 based cognition) to assist in developing a network among SL/FL words and integrating those words into their knowledge system. Reversed translation from L1 to SL/FL assists the learners to realise that a once-established L1=SL/FL word equation might need to be rewritten in their cognition, and further assists them to develop more intricate word relationships with which to differentiate words in SL/FL.

What specific language and other targets are most effectively learnt or taught by using an *act of translating* approach depends on each SL/FL learning situation. Contrastive analysis of L1 and SL/FL may highlight some linguistic expressions as clear targets for the class. The learners carefully read the SL/FL text in depth and likely read outside of the text as well to translate the text message properly into L1. Thus, topics of the text should be something interesting, worthy, and/or relevant to the students' circumstances and pursuits. Last but not least, translation takes time to be completed. The part to be done with teacher assistance in class and the work to be left to the learners to discover should be balanced.

V. Conclusion

The author hopes that the above discussion persuades scholars and practitioners in the field to investigate the possibility of including *act of translating* in their own teaching. The discussion above is limited to using the methodology in advanced level SL/FL classes to further students SL/FL acquisition through the holistic learning provided by *act of translating.* What the author has not provided or discussed in this paper are case specific goals to achieve when using the methodology. Those goals should guide how the methodology is to be introduced and how extensively or intensively used in the class to achieve them. The exclusion of specific goals naturally made any discussion of the assessment when using the methodology out of the scope of this paper. Thus, there is potential for practitioner-researchers to investigate use of the methodology in their particular SL/FL learning situations and to generate more research outcomes and suggestions.

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Portfolio as a Viable Alternative in Writing Assessment

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***Abstract*—This study represents a quantitative attempt specifically addressing the development of EFL students' mechanics of writing in portfolio-based assessment. To carry out the study, 40 university students were selected and randomly divided into two experimental and control groups. The students in the sample were tested with the following instruments at the beginning and the end of the study: Trinity's ISE (Integrated Skills in English) Writing Test and Error Detection in Mechanics of Writing, English Language Test (CELT) was administered as pre-test to homogenize the experimental and control groups Comprehensive. The results of the study confirmed that students whose work was evaluated by a portfolio system (portfolio-based assessment) had a significant reduction in their errors in mechanics of writing when compared to those students whose work was evaluated by the more traditional evaluation system (non-portfolio-based assessment).The findings also revealed that there was a positive correlation between the dependent scorer of final examination and the independent scorer of portfolio assessment.**

***Index Terms*—alternative assessment, portfolio, mechanics of writing, portfolio assessment**

I. Introduction

Assessment is undergoing a paradigm shift from psychometrics to a broader model of educational assessment from testing culture to assessment culture (Gipps,1994).The underlying premise of traditional testing is that intelligence is fixed, innate and measurable. On the other hand, the underlying alternative assessment paradigm is the epistemology of mind that assumes that intelligence is flexible and subject to change. Disenchanted with the decontexualized psychometric–based testing of writing ability, the current study attempts to employ the portfolio-based writing assessment as a viable contextualized alternative approach that links teaching, learning, and assessment within a single context. It is intended to assess students more holistically and to view their development in mechanics of writing over a period of time, as well as encourage meta-cognitive and an independent attitude to learning. The portfolio-based assessment has grown out of a concern for how best to demonstrate competence in writing**.** The proponents of alternative assessment consider direct assessment as a more valid measure because it measures the behavior being assessed. They doubt the effectiveness of traditional testing as a valid assessment of writing ability. Olshtain (1991) asserts that effective writing requires a sound understanding of the mechanics of writing which include parts of speech, the rules of grammar and punctuation. Jack. C, Richards, Platt and Platt (1992) define mechanics of writing as those aspects of writing such as spelling, punctuation, capitalization, abbreviations, numbering which are often dealt with in the revision or editing stages of writing (p. 224). According to Murphy (1999), no system of assessment is as perfect as portfolio for writing assessment, because students are required to write, but within this requirement they can choose the topic, audience, responses in the class, revision strategies, and so on. They also are free to select from their works the pieces they want to include in their portfolios. This shows that portfolios may be used as a holistic process for evaluating course work and for promoting learner autonomy (Jack C. Richards and Willy A. Renandya, 2002). Perfect writing can be possible only when students with feedbacks which are gained from teacher and/or peers have control of writing system, mechanics of writing (punctuation, capitalization, abbreviation, numbering, and spelling) and grammar to solve the problem in writing effective compositions.

The literature on the importance of portfolio assessment is rich (Hamp-Lyons & Condon, 2000; Defina, 1992; Yancey, 1999; Harris& Sandra, 2001; Song& Augest, 2002; Chang, 2008). However, most of the research reported in the literature is either of qualitative type or focuses on quantitative research to investigate writing skill in general (Song & Augest, 2002). This study represents a quantitative attempt specifically addressing the development of EFL student' mechanics of writing in portfolio-based assessment. In order to appraise its usefulness for this purpose this study will document, analyze, compare and contrast students' performances in the portfolios, the in course pre-tests and the final examination with those of control group. The independent evaluation of student final portfolios by an independent scorer aimed at eliminating instructor bias resulting from factors other than the work submitted will be correlated with their final examination scores to explore their interrelationship. The results of the study will be examined in order to reach conclusions regarding how effective portfolio-based writing assessment is for developing mechanics of writing for students who take final examination. The study, therefore, seeks to answer the following questions and subsequent hypotheses:

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1. Are there particular errors of mechanics of writing which can be eliminated in the portfolios still emerge under examination conditions?

H1: There is a negative relationship between the frequencies of occurrence of particular error types under examination conditions and their elimination in student's portfolios.

2. Would the independent evaluation of student's final portfolios correlate positively with their final examination scores?

H2: There is a positive correlation between the independent evaluation (by independent scorer) of student's final portfolios with their final examination scores.

II. Review of Related Literature

A. Alternatives in Assessment

Garcia and Pearson (1994) point out that that alternative assessment consists of all of those "efforts that do not adhere to the traditional criteria of standardization, efficiency. cost-ffectiveness, objectivity and machine scorability"(p. 355).In addition to the performance of problem-solving tasks, portfolio-based writing assessment has become another alternative measure to multiple choice or timed writing tests for determining how well students understand and apply concepts. Traditional assessment has been profoundly influenced by a positivist epistemology that assumes one can achieve objectivity and consequently uncover truths about the real world. Underlying testing culture is an epistemology of intelligence which assumes that intelligence is a unitary and immutable trait, fixed , innate and measurable.

Alternative assessment is characterized by: an investigation of developmental sequences in student learning, a sampling of genuine performances that reveal the underlying thinking processes, and the provision of an opportunity for further learning. Teaching and assessment are integrated, the student is an active participant in the process of developing assessment criteria and standards. The evaluation is reported in the form of a qualitative profile.

Marx (2001) suggests portfolio-based assessment as means of individualized, student-centered evaluation has the potential to improve the complex task of student assessment, as well as to contribute to a more positive attitude toward the educational process

B. Portfolio Assessment

Arter (1989) defined portfolio as "a purposeful collection of student work that tells the story of a student's efforts, progress, or achievement. It must include student participation in the selection of portfolio content, criteria for selection, criteria for judging merit, and evidence of student self-reflection" (p. 27). The overall purpose of the portfolio is to enable the student to demonstrate to others learning and progress. The greatest value of portfolios is that, in building them, students become active participants in the learning process and its assessment.

A standardized traditional evaluation administered at the end of the term which is inflexible and tightly controlled hardly constitutes an effective method for assessing EFL students' writing ability. Hence, Portfolio-based assessment offers a viable alternative to traditional, standardized, high stakes testing. It provides a means for those students at risk for academic failure to demonstrate progress within a format less restrictive and inflexible than the traditional means.

Varvus (1990) asserts that portfolio must be systematic, organized evidence which is used by the teacher and student to measure growth of knowledge, skills, and attitudes. The objectives and contents for the portfolios must be negotiated by individual teachers and students rather than set by authorities. Students need to participate in developing the criteria and creating the rubric that is used to grade their work. Ou (2004) indicates that the following features should be considered for developing rubrics of portfolio assessment: degree of achievement of a learning goal, degree to which a student shows personal characteristics, the degree of collaboration with others, and capability to utilize resources. The major impact of portfolio assessment is the development of self-assessment ability in the students. Therefore, the goal of portfolio assessment is to cultivate student self-assessment and development abilities, and not limited to student evaluation only (Kuo, 2004; Popham, 2002, cited in chang, 2008). O'Malley and Chamot, (1990) believe that the development of self-assessment can have several outcomes for the student: students take responsibility for knowing where they are with regard to learning goals; students broaden their view of what is being learned; and students begin to see language learning as a process. The present study is also concerned with the use of portfolios for developing students' self-assessment of mechanics of writing in an EFL context.

C. Challenges to Portfolio Assessment: Reliability and Validity

Despite its potential benefits for curriculum and assessment, portfolio assessment has been criticized by psychometric camp for its affiliation with alternatives in assessment. Brown and Hudson (1998) summarized major challenges leveled against portfolio assessment: the issues of design decision, logistics, interpretation, reliability, and validity. Song and Augest (2002) indicate that of great concern are the assessment's time-consuming nature, and the issues of reliability and validity. Validity is concerned with the extent to which an instrument measures what it is supposed to measure. On the other hand, reliability refers to the consistency of measurement across students or across the body of work of a single student. Because standardizing portfolio content and scoring guides has been problematic, the portfolio should not be discarded as a measuring instrument. Hamp-Lyons and Condon (2000) believe that both reliability and validity are necessary and must be established "if portfolio-based assessments are to grow and to replace less satisfactory ones"

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(p. 136) since only these types of data can convince bureaucrats. Williams (2000) believes that unreliability and lack of validity in procedures will cause portfolio assessment lose its fairness and credibility.

Herta-Mcias (1995) points out that the proponents of alternative assessment suggest not to overlook these criteria, for any high quality assessment must adhere to them. Rather, the suggestion is that we apply new words that have been borrowed from the literature on qualitative research. Concerns with validity and reliability of assessment instruments have been addressed in qualitative research through the use of the term *trustworthiness.* An instrument is deemed to be *trustworthy* if it has *credibility* (i.e., truth value) and *auditability* (i.e., consistency) (p.9).She further adds that Reliability, or consistency, in qualitative research is often ensured through yet another means, *triangulation.* In qualitative research, triangulation refers to the combination of methodologies to strengthen a study design (Patton, 1987). When applied to portfolio assessment, triangulation refers to multiple collections of data through different writing drafts and thick description of the portfolio writing procedures. There is evidence that portfolios inform students, as well as teachers and parents, and that the results can be used to improve instruction, another major dimension of good assessment (Gomez, Grau, & Block, 1991). This is in line with the idea of as consequential validity which maintains that a major determinant of the validity of an assessment measure is the consequence that the measure has upon the student, the instruction, and the curriculum (Linn, Baker, & Dunbar, 1991). Moss (1994) indicates that alternative assessment, specifically portfolio-based writing, can broaden practitioners and even psychometricians' understanding of why decontextualized approaches are no longer fair and workable.

III. METHOD

The current study investigates the effects of portfolio-based assessment on the development of mechanics of writing in EFL students' final examination scores. Due to some limitations, the intact classes were used in a quasi-experimental design. The participants for the study were recruited from among the students who were enrolled in second-semester freshman English composition course at E.C.O. College of Insurance. Initial enrollment in this course totaled 68 students. Out of 68 examinees, the researcher finally nominated 40 participants and randomly divided them into two experimental and control groups. To be confident that there were no significant difference among the subjects of the Experimental Group (EG) and Control Group (CG) regarding the variables under investigation, both groups were pre-tested at the beginning of the experiment. The students in the sample were tested with the following instruments at the beginning and the end of the term: Trinity's ISE (Integrated Skills in English) Writing Test. The students were additionally tested with Error Detection in Mechanics of Writing. In order to appraise the homogeneity of the experimental and control groups Comprehensive English Language Test (CELT) was employed as a pre-test at the beginning of the term. All students have completed at least one previous three-credit composition course; approximately all of these students have also completed an additional Intermediate General English course. None of the students have prior experience with portfolios. Both groups involved in this study were taught by the same teacher in order to provide uniformity of instruction. Therefore, the researcher and the instructor were the same.

A. Data Collection Procedure

During the second week of the term, students in classes of English writing at E.C.O. College of Insurance received information about the nature of this study and were invited to participate. Students who agreed to take part in the study indicated so by signing consent forms. After completing the consent forms, all students were administered Comprehensive English Language Test (CELT), Trinity's ISE (Integrated Skills in English) Writing Test and Error Detection in Mechanics of Writing. Since English was the language of instruction at E.C.O. College of Insurance, the students were mostly at intermediate level. Both groups involved in this study were taught in the same manner and by the same instructor in order to provide uniformity of instruction. Therefore the instructional methods, textbooks and assignments in both the experimental and the control groups were identical.

In compliance with the class syllabus, the instructor taught students how to shape their college writings. Instruction followed the writing-as-process approach as far as possible. All students completed six assigned essays, and a post-test timed writing during the 16-week semester.

As is common in a writing class with a traditional (non-portfolio) method of evaluation in place, the control group turned in each essay as it was due, and the instructor marked and commented on each essay and then assigned it a grade. In the experimental group, portfolio evaluation was established. Students turned in their essays and writings on the due date, but no grade was recorded at that time. They submitted one draft each session they met the teacher, selected from among three writing tasks namely Essay writing, letter writing and creative writing provided at the beginning of the procedure. They received respective feedbacks (evaluation scales) by the next session that the class met (See appendix B). Students were credited for any revisions made. At certain points during the term, the instructor directed revision by focusing students' attention on certain strategies, such as sentence combining, strengthening weak verbs, writing effective introductions, titles, mechanics of writing (punctuation, capitalization, abbreviation, spelling, grammar, and use of numbers). Written feedbacks were emailed to students within two days; consequently, students in portfolio-based group had enough time to reflect on their writings and polish them before the next session met. (See appendix C for a sample draft). Students could continue to work on previously written papers until the end of the term. At the end of the term, students presented a portfolio of work to the instructor for evaluation and the term grade. The portfolio consisted

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of two polished papers (final drafts) along with first, second and third drafts for each paper respectively written during the term, and a meta-analytical cover letter. Students selected the two papers which represented the best of their work of the term. Students were encouraged to extensively revise these papers in the meantime. All prewriting, drafts, and evidences of revision for each of the two papers were included in the portfolio. The purpose of the cover letter was to allow students to reflect upon their writing processes in general, and to justify the inclusion of the papers which they had selected as representative of their best work. (See Appendix C for a copy of the instructions for compiling portfolios which were given to students). In order to eliminate instructor bias resulting from factors other than the work submitted (e.g., attendance, participation, student disposition toward the class or teacher) (Baker, 1993); an independent scorer were invited to evaluate final assessment of portfolios. During the last week of the term, all students were post-tested with the same instruments used in pre-testing.

In order to gather the data necessary for this study, the Comprehensive English Language Test (CELT) were completed by both groups at the beginning of the semester. The students were additionally administered the Trinity's ISE (Integrated Skills in English) Writing Test and Error Detection in Mechanics of Writing at the beginning and at the end of the semester.

B. Data Analysis

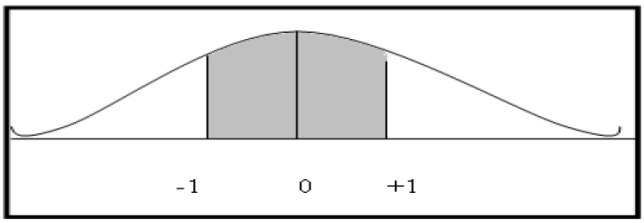
As the first step in the data analysis the researcher tried to select a homogeneous sample of the population. A preliminary examination for homogeneity of the experimental and control groups was conducted with 68 candidates bearing almost the same background of English proficiency. The test scores obtained from the performance of subjects on the Comprehensive English Language Test (CELT).To have a more homogeneous group of candidates for the main phase of the study, high scorers and low scorers were eliminated from the main framework of the study. Almost +1 and -1 standard deviation from the mean score is the valid and reliable way of selecting homogenous sample population, hence, out of 68 examinees, the researcher finally nominated 40 participants and randomly divided them into two experimental and control groups.

TABLE 1

Descriptives

CELT

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
Male	34	58.2813	7.0949	1.2542	55.7233	60.8392	47.00	75.00
Female	34	58.7813	8.7279	1.5429	55.6345	61.9280	43.00	75.00
Total	68	58.5313	7.8941	.9868	56.5594	60.5031	43.00	75.00



Graph 1

High scores and low scores were eliminated from the main framework

The researcher conducted a One Way ANOVA including the Levene Test to approve of the homogeneity of both experimental and control groups in terms of their proficiency based on their scores on Comprehensive English Language Test (CELT). Table 2 reveals the results of the Levene statistical test on Comprehensive English Language Test (CELT). The Levene statistic was 3.022 with the significance of 0.000. The value of 3.022 is the indicative of a group of candidates with almost the same homogeneity of variances performing the Test of CELTA.

TABLE 2
TEST OF HOMOGENEITY OF VARIANCES DERIVED BY SPSS SOFTWARE

Test of Homogeneity of Variances

CELT

Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
3.022	1	66	.000

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In order to make doubly sure of the homogeneity of both experimental and control groups, the ANOVA table is presented here.

TABLE 3

ANOVA

CELT

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	4.000	1	4.000	.063	.802
Within Groups	3921.938	66	63.257		
Total	3925.938[a]	67			

a. The table indicates that the mean differnce between the two groups of candidates is not significant at all. Hence the partisipants in this study are completely homogeneous.

As for the phase of the statistical procedures which is devoted to the approval of difference between the Experimental and Control Groups in error detection of mechanics of writing. The Paired-samples t-test was employed because the trait to be tested was of the same nature for both groups. According to Hatch and Farhady (1982), the t-test is probably the most widely used statistical test for the comparison of two means because it can be used with very small sample sizes. To go through the procedure and compare the results of two groups a paired t-test was used to determine whether there were significant differences between the two groups on each of these two variables. The researcher employed t-tests on the pretest measures for Trinity's ISE (Integrated Skills in English) writing and error detection in mechanics of writing. Regarding the first research question, the findings represented in the tables 4 and 5 indicates difference between the performance of both experimental and control groups in dealing with errors using mechanics of writing.

1. Are there particular errors of mechanics of writing which can be eliminated in the portfolios still emerge under examination conditions?

H1: There is a negative relationship between the frequencies of occurrence of particular error types under examination conditions and their elimination in student's portfolios.

T-Test

TABLE 4

Paired Samples Correlations

		N	Correlation	Sig.
Pair 1	Error Detection in Mechanics of Writing of both experimental and Control Groups	20	-.475	.002

TABLE 5

Paired Samples Test

		Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	Error Detection in Mechanics of Writing of both experimental and Control Groups	8.3000	3.8908	.6152	9.5443	7.0557	13.5	19	.000

The t value of 13.5 reported in table 5 in a two-tailed study is the indicative of the significant difference between the performances of both groups. This means that students in portfolio-based group outperform the students of non-portfolio-based group. The number of the errors in portfolio-based group under examination conditions was less than that non-portfolio-based group. Accordingly, this substantiates with evidence the soundness of the first hypothesis.

The final phase of the statistics is devoted to the correlation analysis of the obtained data. According to Hatch and Farhady (1982), in correlation studies, researchers are interested in determining the degree of relationship between pairs

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of two or more variables, in other words, correlation studies allow us to determine the extent to which scores on one test are associated with scores on another test. In order to answer the second research question, Bivariate correlation involving the Pearson-moment Product Correlation Coefficient was used.

The tables below approve of the second question and hypothesis:

2. Would the independent evaluation of student's final portfolios correlate positively with their final examination scores?

H2: There is a positive correlation between the independent evaluations (by independent scorer) of student's final portfolios with their final examination scores.

Correlations

TABLE 6

Descriptive Statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Dependent Scorer (Final Examiantion)	4.6500	.74516	20
Independent Scorer(Portfolio Assessment)	4.7500	.91047	20

TABLE 7

Correlations

		Dependent Scorer (Final Examiantion)	Independent Scorer(Portfolio Assessment)
Dependent Scorer (Final Examiantion)	Pearson Correlation	1	.640**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.002
	Sum of Squares and Cross-products	10.550	8.250
	Covariance	.555	.434
	N	20	20
Independent Scorer(Portfolio Assessment)	Pearson Correlation	.640**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.002	.
	Sum of Squares and Cross-products	8.250	15.750
	Covariance	.434	.829
	N	20	20

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 7 indicates that there is positive correlation between the dependent scorer of final examination and the independent scorer of portfolio assessment. The obtained value of Pearson Correlation is 0.640 indicating a high and significant correlation between the two variables.

The results of these statistical analyses confirmed that students whose work was evaluated by a portfolio system (portfolio-based assessment) had a significant reduction in their errors in mechanics of writing when compared to those students whose work was evaluated by the more traditional evaluation system (non-portfolio-based assessment).

IV. DISCUSSION

The development of the mechanics of writing reflected in error detection in the students' final examination might be the result of sufficient time span available during their multiple drafting. The researcher calls it gift of time that enables them to use challenging structures and mechanics of writing in their written task performance. Findings from this study indicated that writing and assessing portfolios were beneficial to students. Even if they encountered many problems in the process, they learned a lot from solving their problems and taking responsibility of their own learning. The students of portfolio-based group benefited from the reflective nature of the task. Reflection was a self-assessment tool, which helped the learner in the experimental group of the current study to look at the strength and weaknesses of a particular learning activity and consider how to improve the weakness.

The findings of the current study raised concern as for the suitability of traditional assessment for assessing writing. Hamp-Lyons & Condon (2000) point out that these exams particularly handicap ESL students because they not only test them on unfamiliar genres and tasks, but also require them to meet standards of excellence in grammatical and mechanical accuracy they cannot reach on a first draft in 50 minutes. The purposefully selected collection of student work over time can provide clear evidence of the student's knowledge, concept development, strategies, skills, attitudes

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and efforts. A portfolio can clearly demonstrate what each student has learned and what the individual student can do. It serves to demonstrate student progress toward specific learning objectives and to inform meaningful instruction.

The traditional view of reliability is too narrow to take into account the "less standard forms of assessment" such as the portfolio. In portfolio assessment reliability is mostly concerned with fairness reflected in the degree of agreement on the design of rubric between the scorers and students. Having students involved in the rubrics gives them the feeling of responsibility for the portfolio. Extended performance and the portfolio require that readers be trained to agree and to score papers based on a common rubric that describes numerical points. If readers agree, there is a reliable rate of agreement. If readers do not agree, there is low inter-rater reliability. To address the inter-rater reliability which is one of the main problems of reliability in L2 portfolio assessment the student's final portfolios were evaluated by independent scorer to eliminate the possible bias.

V. Recommendations and Suggestions for Further Research

Because quantitative data are so limited in portfolio assessment studies, more studies of this nature should be replicated using other types of writing competency exams .In addition, studies with mixed designs should be conducted to further explore the effects of portfolio assessment and its validation. Research into the efficacy of portfolio-based assessment has just begun. Extensive, ongoing research is a critical component in the process of this approach's rubric standardization. Electronic portfolios, as one type of alternative assessment, allow students to review, reflect, and determine what caused them to change. Then they can use this new information to determine future learning experiences. According to McLaughlin and Vogt (1996), as the field of technology is expanding rapidly every day, opportunities for electronic portfolios as an assessment tool will continue to advance. This requires new research efforts through explorations in the world wide web to transform the practice of portfolio assessment in the years to come.

Appendix A

The following evaluation scale has been taken from (ISE Handbook From 2004) *Integrated Skills in English examinations* I, II and III.

Evaluation scale for the writing skills assessment test

6

The essay provides a well-organized response to the topic and maintains a central focus. The ideas are expressed in appropriate language. A sense of pattern of development is present from beginning to end. The writer supports assertions with explanation or illustration, and the vocabulary is well suited to the context. Sentences reflect a command of syntax within the ordinary range of standard written English. Grammar, punctuation, and spelling are almost always correct.

5

The essay provides an organized response to the topic. The ideas are expressed in clear language most of the time. The writer develops ideas and generally signals relationships within and between paragraphs. The writer uses vocabulary that is appropriate for the essay topic and avoids oversimplifications or distortions. Sentences generally are correct grammatically, although some errors may be present when sentence structure is particularly complex. With few exceptions, grammar, punctuation, and spelling are correct.

4

The essay shows a basic understanding of the demands of essay organization, although there might be occasional digression. The development of ideas is sometimes incomplete or rudimentary, but a basic logical structure can be discerned. Vocabulary generally is appropriate for the essay topic but at times is oversimplified. Sentences reflect a sufficient command of standard written English to ensure reasonable clarity of expression. Common forms of agreement and grammatical inflection are usually, although not always, correct. The writer generally demonstrates through punctuation an understanding of the boundaries of the sentence. The writer spells common words, except perhaps so-called "demons," with a reasonable degree of accuracy.

3

The essay provides a response to the topic but generally has no overall pattern of organization. Ideas are often repeated or undeveloped, though occasionally a paragraph within the essay does have some structure. The writer uses informal language occasionally and records conversational speech when appropriate written prose is needed. Vocabulary often is limited. The writer generally does not signal relationships within and between paragraphs. Syntax is often rudimentary and lacking in variety. The essay has recurrent grammatical problems, or because of an extremely narrow range of syntactical choices, only occasional grammatical problems appear. The writer does not demonstrate a firm understanding of the boundaries of the sentence. The writer occasionally misspells common words of the language.

2

The essay begins with a response to the topic but does not develop that response. Ideas are repeated frequently, or are presented randomly, or both. The writer uses informal language frequently and does little more than record conversational speech. Words are often misused, and vocabulary is limited. Syntax is often tangled and is not sufficiently stable to ensure reasonable clarity of expression. Errors in grammar, punctuation, and spelling occur often.

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1

The essay suffers from general incoherence and has no discernible pattern of organization. It displays a high frequency of error in the regular features of standard written English. Lapses in punctuation, spelling, and grammar often frustrate the reader. Or, the essay is so brief that any reasonably accurate judgment of the writer's competence is impossible.

Advice to the student	✓
Task Fulfilment	
Parts of the task have not been completed—look again at the instructions	
The draft does not meet the requirements set—you must choose a different task	
This work does not appear to be entirely your own—you must choose a different task	
You should add some more ideas	
You should give more reasons/opinions	
You should give more description	
You need to rewrite the work with more legible handwriting	
The style/register of your language is not appropriate to the task	
Organisation	
Your presentation and/or layout need to be tidied up	
You should check your organisation and/or paragraphing	
You need to add an introduction	
You need to add a conclusion	
Your work contains a lot of repetition	
Grammar	
You need to check the grammar of your work	
You should use a greater range of grammatical structures	
You need to check your word order	
Vocabulary	
You should use a greater range of vocabulary	
You need to check you are using the correct words	
Spelling/Punctuation	
You should check the spellings of words in your work	
You should check and improve the punctuation in your work	

APPENDIX B

INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPILING YOUR PORTFOLIO

Your writing portfolio is a showcase of the best writing you have done this term. It should contain the following:

1. A table of contents
2. A reflective evaluation on your growth as a writer this term. You may wish to make specific references to other writings you have included in your portfolio.
3. Two polished, along with all revised drafts, peer evaluations, self evaluations sheets for each paper.

When grading your portfolio, I will use the evaluation form that we went over in class. You have a copy in your folder.

APPENDIX C

A Sample Draft

Task1 Draft1

The letter shows a basic understanding of the demands of letter organization, although there might be occasional digression. The development of ideas is sometimes incomplete or rudimentary, but a basic logical structure can be discerned. Vocabulary generally is appropriate for the topic but at times is oversimplified. Sentences reflect a sufficient command of standard written English to ensure reasonable clarity of expression. Common forms of agreement and grammatical inflection are usually, although not always, correct. The writer generally demonstrates through punctuation

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an understanding of the boundaries of the sentence. The writer spells common words, except perhaps so-called "demons," with a reasonable degree of accuracy.

Advice to the student

Task Fulfillment

You should add some more ideas
You should give more reasons/opinions
You should give more description

Organization

Your presentation and/or layout need to be tidied up
You should check your organization and/or paragraphing
You need to add an introduction
You need to add a conclusion

Grammar

You need to check the grammar of your work
You should use a greater range of grammatical structures
You need to check your word order

Vocabulary

You should use a greater range of vocabulary
You need to check you are using the correct words

Spelling/Punctuation

You should check the spellings of words in your work
You should check and improve the punctuation in your work

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The Critical Period Hypothesis Revisited: The Implications for Current Foreign Language Teaching to Young Learners

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***Abstract*—Teaching foreign languages to young learners is gaining popularity all over the world and as a result the age for learning a second/foreign language is being reduced in many countries. However, the outcomes of early language teaching haven't been thoroughly investigated and the question related to why we are teaching English at younger ages is not answered adequately. The SLA research has investigated the issue of age as an outcome of L1 acquisition research. The studies related to age and the 'Critical Period Hypothesis' (CPH) were mostly conducted in the second language environments and neglected the foreign language contexts. Moreover, the results of such studies, where adults versus children; and younger children versus older children are compared, have conflicting findings. Thus, the study aims to reconsider the 'Critical Period Hypothesis' by discussing significant considerations in the literature, such as neurolinguistic, cognitive and affective arguments and studies comparing children with adults. It also aims to shed some light on current foreign language teaching practices. In addition, the implications of the CPH to teaching English to young learners will be discussed.**

***Index Terms*—the critical period hypothesis, CPH, young learners, foreign language learning**

I. Introduction

Recently, the starting age for learning a second/foreign language (SL/FL) has been reduced in many countries in Europe and Asia. The efforts for learning FLs are not only a result of globalization but also the result of "younger the better" philosophy. Learning languages become a societal need to have better jobs, wider communication opportunities and higher social standards. The issue of age for learning languages has been the scope of linguistic and FL education studies for a long time. The initial studies were triggered by the Critical Period Hypothesis (CPH). Thus, the current study aims to revisit the CPH with extensive literature review to shed some light on the current language teaching practices.

II. Background

A. Neurolinguistic Arguments

In the previous second language research, learners' inability, beyond a certain age, to learn the second language's certain aspects is considered as a biological and developmental phenomenon, which has been argued within the scope of the critical period hypothesis (CPH) (Brown, 1980). Competence, in behavioral domains, is believed to increase gradually as the person develops. However, in domains such as SL/FL language development, it has been argued that this continuous increase of competence reaches a peak point and then starts to decline after this period (Johnson & Newport, 1989).

According to critical period hypothesis, which was first put forward for the learning of the mother tongue, language acquisition process must be completed before puberty, for it is suggested that language develop fully until then. Although critical period was suggested for first language acquisition, the claim that brain reaches its adult values until puberty and that there will be a loss of brain plasticity and its reorganizational capacities, made researchers undertake studies of second language learning over age. If there is a critical period, then it must have a different characteristic when it is applied to second language learning (Johnson & Newport, 1989). CPH has not been interpreted adequately in some cases, where it was assumed that by puberty you are "over the hill" to learn a second language successfully (Brown, 1993). This interpretation constitutes the strong version of the hypothesis. In other words, what CPH says according to this version is that natural and complete acquisition of a language can occur only between the ages two and puberty, and also that children and adults acquire the language differently (Krashen, Sferlazza, Feldman, and Fathman, 1976).

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In contrast to these claims, Krashen (1973) suggests that, lateralization of the brain is complete before puberty, and therefore it is "not a barrier to accent-free second language learning by adults" (p. 63). He argues that lateralization process develops during first language acquisition, as early as age five.

Krashen (1973) supports this idea by looking at the "reports of psychological testing of children with unilateral brain damage" (p. 65). According to the results of the previous studies he examined, unilateral brain damage causes same results both in children and adults; "left lesions impair performance on verbal tests and do not affect performance on spatial and configurational tests, while right sided lesions impair performance on spatial and configurational tests and do not affect verbal scores" (p. 65).

Krashen (1973) also looked at the results of dichotic listening, that is, presenting subjects "with competing simultaneous auditory stimuli, one to each ear. In right handed subjects the right ear generally excels for verbal material, reflecting left hemisphere specialization. The left ear excels for certain non-verbal stimuli, indicating right hemisphere dominance" (p. 66). CPH, that suggests lateralization after puberty, claims that, in dichotic listening the superiority of the right ear would increase during childhood, and it would reflect the growing dominance of the left hemisphere. On the contrary, "lateralization-by-five hypothesis" claims that the superiority degree would not change after the age five. Krashen (1973), supports this idea with his study where he tested children between the ages four and nine, and could neither find a significant change in the degree of lateralization, nor a right ear advantage.

In the light of these explanations it can be assumed that, the development of lateralization is completed far before puberty. Therefore, it is possible to learn a second language after puberty. However, this time language learning might not be rapid or efficient as the acquisition of the native language. In addition to this, completion of lateralization does not construct a barrier to the language learner (Krashen, 1973).

B. Cognitive and Affective Arguments

Brown (1980), brings out an affective component to the CPH, which he calls "the optimal distance model". Some researchers have based their explanations on the optimal stage, on the lateralization of the brain functions, and some others supported their hypothesis by cognitive and affective arguments. It is then, the CPH was extended to second language learning. Most of us have observed that children can learn second languages more easily than adults. And most of us assumed that adults are rather inefficient and unsuccessful when compared to children (Brown, 1980).

As a result of the research on this area cognitive and affective arguments found to be more convincing than physiological, brain-related arguments. However, both of these arguments agreed that the ease or difficulty of learning a language, either first or second, is age-related. Brown (1980) argues that, if second language acquisition (SLA) is occurring within the second language culture it might be possible to explain CPH by including socio-cultural factors. He claims that such factors, no matter the person's age, go through acculturation. If second language learning is happening in the second language culture, it is very much related with culture learning. Brown (1980) further claims that "The interaction of language and culture produces a syndrome which gives rise to a certain stage during which language learning achieves an optimal level. At that critical stage, adults and children, have an optimal chance to become fluent in the second language." (p. 158) According to Brown (1980), there are four aspects of the optimal distance model:

1) Acculturation: He claims that there are four stages of the acculturation process that people face while assimilating in a new culture:

a) *Period of excitement and euphoria:* this stage is a result of the new environment.

b) *Culture Shock:* This stage occurs when the person becomes aware of the cultural differences and sees those differences as a threat to his self and security. During this stage the person looks for people from his culture to rely on. The result of this stage may be the feelings of estrangement, frustration, homesickness, … etc.

c) *Gradual Recovery:* In this stage the person solves some of his problems about the new culture, and he becomes more empathetic, and starts to appreciate the differences between his culture and the target language culture.

d) *Assimilation or Adaptation:* This is a result of near or full recovery. The person starts to build in self-confidence in the new culture.

2) Anomie: As a result of learning a second language and being exposed to, or living in, the second language culture people may have feelings, such as social uncertainty or dissatisfaction.

3) Social Distance: "Social distance refers to the cognitive and affective proximity of two cultures which come into contact with an individual." (p. 158) Distance, here, represents the differences between the two cultures.

4) Perceived Social Distance: Each person perceives the same cultural environment differently. Their perception is through the "filters of their own world" (Brown, 1980, p. 160), then, no matter how biased their opinion may be, they act upon their perception.

Brown (1980) claims that, the beginning of the third stage in acculturation process, is the point when persons gain skillful fluency in second language. Adults' failure in synchronizing linguistic and cultural development may result with a failure in learning a second language in the second language culture. Since children do not have a culture bound view, they do not have perspective filters like adults do, and as a result they can pass through the acculturation process quickly, and consequently learn the language more quickly.

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The limitation of the optimal distance model is that, it is applicable to only SL learning in the target language culture. According to optimal distance model, the adults experience difficulty in SL learning because acculturation and language development is inefficiently synchronized (Brown, 1980).

C. Younger Children versus Older Children

"Second language learning primarily involves the acquisition of a new set of realization rules by means of which the new language expresses underlying relations and modes of the cognitive organization of a universal type" (Richards, 1975, p. 126). Studies have shown that the rule-system of the language learner is not a result of imitation. As it is understood from the error analysis, the learner recreates the system of the language for himself by the help of universal learning strategies. One of the universal principles of child language, and an adult second language learner is their tendency towards the simplification of the rules. That is, by applying them into expanded areas, and by dropping rules where there is a limited applicability (Richards, 1975).

Errors made by children learning English as their second language, are developmental, not interference errors as it was thought. In this sense their errors are similar to the errors of children who learn English as their mother tongue (Bailey, Madden, and Krashen, 1974).

Adults' errors, on the other hand, are mostly the same with the learners of different native languages and considered false hypotheses about the second language (Bailey, Madden, and Krashen, 1974). Bailey, Madden, and Krashen (1974) argued that adult target language learning has natural sequence of acquisition. Adults were compared with older children, whose ages are between five and eight, in respect to their cognitive maturity. Consequently, the result of their study showed that adults use similar strategies with children, when learning a second language. Adults having different native languages made similar mistakes, which proved that errors made while learning second languages are not always the result of interference from the mother-tongue. They also claimed that the major source of errors are intralingual errors not interlanguage errors. Bailey, Madden, and Krashen (1974) concluded that no significant change occurred in language learning strategies during puberty.

Krashen, Sferlazza, Feldman, and Fathman (1976) claims that when comparing children and adults learning a second language, adults seem to be more dependent on formal environments, which indicate that children are more natural when learning a second language. Generally, adults do not reach the proficiency level of the children that is their learning is less "complete". Recent research indicates that most of the adult language errors are common to all adult learners with different linguistic backgrounds.

The results of the study conducted by Krashen, Sferlazza, Feldman, and Fathman (1976) indicated that child and adult ESL learners found similar aspects of English grammar hard or easy. No matter what their L1 background or linguistic environment, both children and adults learning ESL had similar difficulty orderings (Krashen, Sferlazza, Feldman, and Fathman, 1976). These findings imply in contrast to some of the previous studies that, puberty does not cause a big change in certain aspects of language acquisition. It is possible that adults may have access to younger learners' first and second language acquisition strategies.

Snow (1983), also comparing adults and children, claimed that older learners of second languages are superior to the younger ones. In her study, she tested 52 subjects whose ages change between three and a half and fifty-five, and who are all English subjects, learning Dutch in Netherlands. The tests results on communicative skill-story comprehension and storytelling did not show significant age differences. Moreover, she claims that pronunciation showed the smallest effect between ages.

However, when adults were compared with the teenagers, it was observed that they always scored worse. Snow (1983) claims that this is because adults have less contact with the native speakers, whereas, children had six hours in school and always played with Dutch children who didn't know English.

When testing phonological acquisition, it was found out that children are not superior to adults in pronunciation either, and moreover, the so called "children superiority" is not because they hear sounds better than adults. Snow (1983) agrees that children learn more slowly, but they are able to catch up with adult learners, even surpass them in the long run. She points out the need to make a distinction in second language acquisition. Accordingly, "speed of acquisition and the ultimate level of achievement" (p. 145) are two aspects of SLA that need to be considered separately. Snow (1983) argues that children are better in the ultimate level of achievement, whereas adults are faster in the acquisition process.

According to Snow (1983), neurolinguistic explanations are not adequate to prove the presumption that children are superior in second language learning. Successful language learning is more a result of interaction with native speakers and being unsuccessful is very much related with "social, cultural, or economic barriers to contact with native speakers" (p. 146). She (1983) believes that, adults are better language learners, because they are also better in most of the other learning tasks, when compared with children. This is mostly because of the differences in the cognitive development of children and adults. In addition, adults have more world knowledge and language experience than children.

In another study, Fathman (1975) compares younger children with older children to see if there is a difference in the acquisition rate of English grammar structures among younger and older children, and the order of the acquisition of these structures. The results showed that, the rate of learning changes with age; however, order of acquisition did not

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differ among both groups. However, younger children, preteens, achieved significantly higher ratings in pronunciation. According to Fathman (1975), these differences may be a result of maturational, physiological, or environmental factors. She argues that there might be different critical periods for different aspects of a language. Accordingly, during preteen years children have the ability to discriminate, imitate or interpret sounds better, whereas, after adolescence they become better at understanding rules, memorizing structures and making generalizations.

Since most of the studies on critical period hypothesis are not consistent with each other, Krashen, Long, and Scarcella (1979) brings a different argument. The claim is that, there are three points where these studies become consistent:

1) When the time and exposure is the same adults proceed faster in early syntactic and morphological development;

2) Older children surpass younger children in early stages of morphological and syntactic development, again, when time and exposure are the same;

3) Learning a language in a natural context during childhood results with higher proficiency when compared to those who start learning as an adult.

Krashen , Long, and Scarcella (1979) supports the idea that adults and older children are generally faster in acquiring a second language than children "(older-is-better for rate of acquisition)", but children are superior in the ultimate attainment in second language acquisition "(younger-is-better in the long run)" (p.574). The best predictor of ultimate attainment is the age of arrival in the target language speaking community. It has been found that children become more proficient in second language proficiency, because of their age on the arrival, but after a certain period of time their length of residence do not become a distinguishing factor.

The studies concerning the adult / child differences are usually short term studies, and such studies showed that results are superior to children. The studies comparing older and younger children are again short-term studies which showed that if both groups are exposed to second language for the same period of time and in natural environments older children learn syntax and morphology faster. In addition, in formal environments, when older children are compared with adults, it has seen that older children surpass adults in morphology and syntax in about a year. Other studies comparing children, learning a second language in formal environments showed that those who started school on a later age, caught up with the ones who started earlier. (Krashen, Long, and Scarcella, 1979) This might be because younger learners acquire at a much slower pace, and since older ones have more developed cognitive skills they are able to catch up with them by learning fast.

There are also counter arguments to Krashen's evaluation of the previous CPH studies. In a recent article by Marinova-Todd, Marshall, and Snow (2000) three misconceptions about the relationship of the age of the language learner and the L2 learning is discussed through review of the literature. According to the researchers, first, it is misinterpreted that the ultimate attainment is gained by children since they learn quickly and easily. They argue that, in fact, this was not the case and that literature shows examples of older learners learn more than younger learners when the time is kept constant and actually younger learners learn more slowly and with more effort.

Second, the researchers claim that "neuroscientists have often committed an error of misattribution, assuming that differences in the location of two languages within the brain in speed of processing account for differences in proficiency levels and explain poorer performance of older learners" (p. 14). However, Marinova-Todd, Marshall, and Snow (2000) argue that available data is not adequate to guess the exact nature of brain functioning and language behavior.

Third, they claim that there is a misemphasis of unsuccessful older learners with a native-like proficiency ignored. As a result, Marinova-Todd, Marshall, and Snow (2000) argue that age of the learners is not the only factor that affects L2 proficiency. Social, psychological, educational and similar other factors affect proficiency in addition to the learners' age.

III. Discussion

Although the CPH has been investigated by many researchers, the issue of age has not been settled (Scovel, 1988). This is mostly because the issue is more complex so that it involves other factors as well (Nunan, 1999). As can be seen from the previous literature, CPH studies were mostly conducted in ESL environments. However, there is an increase in teaching English in foreign language contexts. Therefore, although results give important insights about adult and child differences in learning a language, contextual, educational, and affective factors are vital to re-consider the results of CPH studies for EFL contexts.

When outlining the pattern of CPH studies Ellis (1985) claims that these studies indicate that age does not have an effect on the route of SLA, that is, the differences in the order of the acquisition is result of other factors. Second, the starting age to learn a language has an effect on the rate of learning so that when the exposure is constant adolescents are better than children and adults. Third, the level of success is affected by the length of exposure and the starting age. The length of exposure contributes to fluency, but the age of learning a SL determines the level of accuracy, especially in pronunciation.

In Europe and in Asia FL teaching has been reduced to primary school and in some countries to kindergarten. If the results of the studies indicate that the major difference that young learners make in learning a language is on

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pronunciation and adolescents are better than adults and young learners in grammar and vocabulary, why are there so many efforts to reduce the age of foreign language learning?

One reason might be related to the fact that exposure to second language plays an important role in the attainment of the language. In contrast to ESL contexts the EFL contexts provide limited exposure to the learners, thus by reducing the age of learning, learners will be exposed to the foreign language longer.

Another difference was seen on the superiority of children on fluency and accurate pronunciation. Similarly, the amount of exposure and the starting age has a great influence to gain native-like pronunciation. This fact also justifies the efforts to reduce the starting age. However, there is another consideration specific to FL contexts, which is related with the language teachers' fluency and accuracy in pronunciation. If this is one of the areas that children are thought to make a difference, they need to be given appropriate modeling of the target language. Yet, the possibility of finding teachers having native-like accents is very limited in the FL environments. The important question that has to be asked here is that whether FL learners have to have a native-like accent. If gaining native-speaker pronunciation is no longer one of the aims of foreign language teaching then we need to re-consider the reasons for learning another language at a younger age.

With the changing needs of the world and the people, the major reason for learning a language become to communicate with other people to keep up with the pace of technology, business, commerce, and mobility. Expecting learners to have a native-like accent would be disregarding the immediate needs of the learners. Fluency and accuracy needs equal emphasis, whereas gaining native-like accent seems secondary when considering the aims of language learning.

Another reason for starting teaching at an early age is a result of people's mobility. For the countries of the EU, for instance, the residents have opportunities to live and work in another country. Not only this requires the competence in the target language but also it requires adapting to the target language community. From this point, the affective explanations of the CPH, as mentioned by Brown (1980) come forth.

Multilingualism and multiculturalism are the recent popular terminologies that we are coming across with frequently. EU's multilingualism strategy is to encourage EU citizens to learn at least two languages in addition to one's native language (EurActiv, 2010). Foreign language learning in such countries is seen as discovering the culture, literature, and the history of the target language community.

Not only in the EU but also all around the world people live and work in countries, which have different native languages than one's own. Because of this reason people learn to adapt to the new country, its culture, its language, and its way of living. As stated earlier this situation may result in culture shock in some cases (Brown, 1993). An early start for learning foreign languages is a facilitative process for children to understand differences and develop a multicultural view point.

When language learning starts at a younger age, it is possible to help children develop positive feelings and attitudes towards other people and cultures having different languages. It creates opportunities to develop acceptance and understanding towards others. Thus, criticisms, incorrect judgments and feelings of superiority would be replaced by recognition and toleration of differences. The result of positive feelings would help children develop positive attitudes towards learning a foreign language. From this perspective it can be argued that teaching FLs to young learners has affective components that help facilitating the language learning process.

In addition to the earlier argument on the effects of contextual factors and purpose of language learning, young learners' cognitive abilities and their characteristics play an important role in FL teaching. The superiority of adolescents can be attributed to their higher cognitive skills than younger learners. The young learner lacks meta-awareness, is egocentric, and is not flexible in his/her thinking (Ellis, 1985). Whereas, the adult, after the age 12, moves into Piaget's period of formal operations by developing hypothetical thinking (Dworetzky, 1993). This ability helps him/her to be flexible in thinking and to recognize not only similarities but also differences. The development of meta-awareness helps the learner to become more analytical, facilitate efficient learning, and increase the pace of learning (Ellis, 1985), however, at the same time it hinders natural learning.

The difference of children from adolescents and adults in EFL contexts is that they do not have a purpose for learning another language when they can perfectly communicate via their mother tongue. Therefore, they need to be given a reason for learning other languages. A reason for a child might be to enjoy in a classroom activity, relate the content with his/her experience, learning songs, learning about other people and places etc. There could be short term (finishing a puzzle, doing a problem solving activity, learning a song etc.) and long term (making a role-play at the end of the term for the parents, communicating with other children on the internet, understanding the instructions of the computer games etc.) reasons for learning. As they haven't developed abstract thinking, it is difficult for them to imagine how they will use the FL in the far future. For the differences that children have from adults the classroom activities and tasks should be designed according to the characteristics and the cognitive abilities of children.

For language learning the major implication of Piaget's theoretical view is that the child constructs his/her knowledge while working in the environment either with objects or ideas. The child is an active sense-maker, learner and thinker. Yet, these are limited to child's experiences in the world. Thus, children's responses to classroom tasks and activities will be dependent on these experiences (Cameron, 2001). Awareness about children's natural skills facilitates the

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process of designing appropriate tasks and activities to help children have maximum gains from the learning process. According to Halliwell (1992) and Cameron (2001), children are creative, imaginative, they like to have fun even when they are learning, unlike adults they appreciate indirect learning, they like talking and they need scaffolding. By using these natural characteristics of children it is possible to develop appropriate teaching and assessment to increase learning outcomes. In addition, consideration of their cognitive abilities, contextual factors, and reasons for language learning is essential to develop successful language programs.

Although inconsistent, the results of CPH studies provide great insights for language educators to understand age differences and contextual factors on the outcomes of language teaching. When regarding these studies it is important to realize that FL teaching is not limited to ESL contexts and that not only age but also other factors such as learning context (ESL vs EFL or formal vs informal), affective factors, and reasons for learning languages have influence in success. Thus, language programs developed specifically for young learners need to consider the multiple facets of FL education.

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A World of Lies in *Heart of Darkness*

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***Abstract*—In *Heart of Darkness,* Joseph Conrad depicts a horrible picture of western colonization in Africa. Through Charlie Marlow, the young protagonist's journey into the depth of the primeval land and his confrontation with Kurtz, the most capable ivory collector in the Congo, Conrad exposes the cruelty and avarice of western civilization and its destructive power on both Europeans and Africans. In the meantime, Conrad brings both Marlow and the readers to discover another more agonizing truth that everyone lives in the illusions and deceptions on different levels.**

***Index Terms*— *Heart of Darkness*, colonization, lies, self-deception**

I. Introduction

Impelled by a desire for adventures, Charlie Marlow, the young British sailor, manages to obtain a contract with a Belgian company which has business in Africa. He boards a French steamer and starts a journey into the centre of the dark continent, the Congo. After a short stay at the Outer Station, he leaves with a caravan for the Central Station where he is expected to repair a wrecked steamer, by which the manager would go to rescue a man named Kurtz at the Inner Station. With the physical shift from the Outer Station to the Central Station and then to the Inner Station, Marlow penetrates step by step into the hinterland of the dark continent and metaphorically into the mysterious world of ideas embodied in Kurtz. Through his exploration into Kurtz's experience and the company's ivory trade, Marlow lifts piece by piece the beautiful veil of western civilization and brings the readers to see the truth that man is living in a world of lies and deceptions.

II. Lies of Western Civilization

Before 1885 the Congo had been visited and explored by Portuguese, Dutch, French and American pioneers. In 1884, Otto von Bismarck, the first chancellor of the newly formed German Empire, came to realize that a territorial, theological or trade war over the Congo would benefit no nation and called a conference in Berlin, at which he made a decision to give the Congo to King Leopold II of Belgium on the condition that King Leopold should guarantee that "all nations would be permitted to trade freely there, that taxes and tariffs would not be collected, and that nations would not be granted monopolies on particular items of trade" (Murfin, 1996, p. 6). Earlier in 1876, Leopold II had expressed his interest and ambition in the Congo that he designed to "open to civilization the only part of our globe where Christianity has not yet penetrated and to pierce the darkness which envelops the entire population" (qtd in Murfin, 1996, p.5). But his promise turned out to be a lie when he took over this land. He broke most of his commitments to Bismarck's 1884 convention by sending his agents to monopolize the ivory trade and rule the natives in the way slaveholders did to the slaves. Instead of bringing civilization to the Congo, King Leopold simply made it the mine of profit for himself and his agents.

In *Heart of Darkness*, Marlow is greatly appalled by the ferocity and hypocrisy of imperialism and colonialism. Under the pretext of civilizing the primitive continent of darkness, Belgian companies send their agents to trade with innocent and credulous natives for their precious ivory. In return, they give the natives cheap European stuff as calico, cotton prints, beads and so on.

To European colonizers, their only concern is trade and their survival in tropical climate. The afflictions and destruction they bring to the natives and the land are out of their minds. The most striking scene Marlow witnesses at the Outer Station is a sharp contrast between the immaculately and elegantly dressed Chief Accountant and the ghostly contorted dying Africans in the nearby inferno-like grove. Soon after Marlow leaves the grove of death, the sight of a white man with "a high starched collar, white cuffs, a light alpaca jacket, snowy trousers, a clear necktie, and varnished boots" (Conrad, 1981, p.28) impresses Marlow as meeting a "miracle," "a sort of vision." Then Marlow learns that the Chief Accountant could keep up his appearance in the unpleasant surroundings haunted by death because he has been training a native woman to do his sewing though she hates the work. A further acquaintanceship brings Marlow to question the humanity in the Chief Accountant. Marlow marvels at the accuracy and devotion of the Accountant to his work, but is shocked at his indifference to the groans of the sick agent in his office.

At the Central Station, Marlow encounters a larger group of cold and greedy whites. The manager and the pilgrims suffer the hostile environment only for the sake of ivory and hence the possible promotion at the company. Ironically

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what these pilgrims do at the station does not go parallel with the name they bear. They do nothing philanthropic. God and faith are far away from them and the only real and dear thing is ivory. Marlow feels that in their talk "the word 'ivory' rang in the air, was whispered, was sighed. You would think they were praying to it" (p. 37). As to the manager, besides praying to collect more ivory, he prays that no disturbance will occur so that he can get promoted at the company. None of them show any mercy to the natives who work for them. Even when the storage shed is on fire, they almost beat a young African to death for they believe that he has caused the fire.

In contrast to this ivory-obsessed group of whites, Kurtz at the Inner Station who proves to be the most capable ivory collector is all the time inspired by a faith to civilize the primordial land as King Leopold II claimed in his ambitious design of the Congo. Another point to differ Kurtz from this group is that he finally comes to the realization of the lie of the so-called noble cause and of the cruelty of colonialism. In this sense, Kurtz is a real man with a thinking mind and a repenting heart. While, the people like the manager and the pilgrims make themselves animals, whose only concern is to satisfy their physical need for money and success.

Of all the whites at the station, Marlow and the Russian Harlequin alone are called there by the mystery, the charm and the vastness of African land. So they have neither profit to make nor a noble cause to devote to, which gives them an advantage to keep their eyes open to what is happening to the land and its people, thus rendering an almost objective judgment on imperialism and Kurtz though their minds have been more or less shaped by western ideology.

While the Russian confirms to Marlow that the natives are simple people who mean no harm to the whites, Marlow's judgment on them undergoes a change. When he feels a touch of insanity in the firing of the French man-of-war into the empty land, someone on board assures him that there is "a camp of natives--he called them enemies!--hidden out of sight somewhere" (p. 21). Even if Marlow does not see any point in his naming the natives enemies, he does not question it for in his mind he still maintains the European bias toward Africans who are generally seen as savages or cannibals. After he sets his feet on the land, Marlow hears more pops of firing and sees the black people run in fear. When his attention is riveted on a gloomy sight of six black men chained in the neck, he can in no way associate them with enemies. They are "criminals, and the outraged law, like the bursting shells, had come to them, an insoluble mystery from the sea" (p. 24). This change from enemies to criminals marks Marlow's doubt of western racial conception. And the doubt develops into a challenge when he begins to appreciate some quality in the natives.

During their rescue journey up to the Inner Station, the starved Africans exhibit great power of restraint. For nearly one month, they have only a few lumps of some stuff like half-cooked dough to eat, "now and then swallowed a piece of, but so small that it seemed done more for the looks of the thing than for any serious purpose of sustenance" (p. 69). If they deserve their name of being cannibals, they have enough courage, strength and motive to eat up the Europeans on board. However, they do not go for them even if they outnumber the whites. Marlow finds that the only reason to refrain them from doing so is their restraint, "one of those human secrets that baffle probability, had come into play there" (p. 69). Because of their restraint, Marlow looks at them as real human beings "with a curiosity of their impulses, motives, capacities, weaknesses, when brought to the test of an inexorable physical necessity. Restraint!" (p. 69) This discovery disturbs Marlow to no small extent when he contrasts the self-restrained Africans with the Europeans who have lost their restraint in plundering the treasures out of African land and even Kurtz too has gone too far away from his restraint in brutalizing the natives for ivory and obedience. Marlow who grows up with European sense of racial superiority cannot so readily accept this new judgment and acknowledge the virtue in Africans, but at least he has taken the first step to negate European value system and reveal the true nature of western civilization.

III. MAN'S WORLD OF LIES

In the early 1600s, European colonizers came to America with a design to turn the virgin land into a new Garden of Eden and make it a permanent home. Therefore they explored and developed the land without doing much damage to it. In contrast, the colonizers in the late 19th century invaded Africa with only the aim to "tear treasure out of the bowels of the land…with no more moral purpose at the back of it than there is in burglars breaking into a safe" (Conrad, 1981, p. 50). Under these circumstances, the mission to civilize the land becomes an absurd lie. But the lie is not simply confined to the abstraction of western civilization, but also extended to the people living by those abstractions.

A. Men's Deceptions

At the call of colonialism and the so-called drive of civilization, many Europeans came to Africa with a hope to try their fortune or to light up the land of darkness. They were unaware of what was awaiting them on this mysterious primitive land. Many of them had died of tropical diseases before they could lay a hand on the ivory. For those who survived, they were unfortunately trapped in the struggle for ivory and power. Such is the case with the manager, the brickmaker and the pilgrims at the Central Station.

The manager strikes Marlow as a very mediocre man with "no genius for organizing, for initiation, or for order even" (p. 34). As Marlow speculates, he could secure his position there mainly because he is never taken ill when "triumphant health in the general rout of constitutions is a kind of power in itself" (p. 35). Without giving Marlow any time for rest from the long tiring trek, the manager entrusts him to finish the repair work on the wrecked steamer within 3 months, for they have to go up to the Inner Station to rescue Mr. Kurtz who was seriously ill. The manager's compliments on Kurtz as the best agent and an exceptional man and his uneasiness about what is occurring at the Inner Station seem to

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tell Marlow that he is very concerned about Kurtz's health. While the unreasonable delay of sending for the rivets without which Marlow could not stop the hole in the steamer and the manager's startlingly accurate estimation of the time required of the repair lead Marlow to suspect of the manager's motive. One unexpected overhearing of the talk between the manager and his uncle confirms his suspicion that the manager is conspiring against Kurtz.

In the view of Cedric Watts (1977), *Heart of Darkness* is a murder story if a murder plot can be defined as "a scheme to delay a man's relief in conditions which virtually ensure that without prompt relief the man will succumb to disease and death" (p. 83). According to Watts, the manager has made a deliberate but seemingly guileless plot to postpone the rescue work. First he gets the steamer wrecked just 2 days before Marlow's coming, "They had started 2 days before in a sudden hurry up the river with the manager on board, in charge of some volunteer skipper, and before they had been out three hours they tore the bottom out of her on stones, and she sank near the south bank" (Conrad, 1981, p. 33-4). Secondly, he intentionally does not give the dictation to the brickmaker who writes the letter for the supplies so that Marlow cannot go on with his repair. "There were cases of them down at the coast---cases---piled up---burst---split! You kicked a loose rivet at every second step in that station-yard on the hillside… and there wasn't one rivet to be found where it was wanted (p. 45-6). Later the confidential conversation between the manager and his uncle makes it clear that the manager has no real concern about Kurtz. He hates Kurtz and would rather see him die because Kurtz's influential background at the company and his amazing capacity make himself a great obstacle in the manager's way of success. "He bothered me enough when he was here… conceive you---that ass! And he wants to be manager!" (p. 54) So when the manager defends his work, "the extraordinary series of delays is not my fault. I did my best" (p. 54), he is obviously lying. As he calculates, it takes three months for the repair and another two months for the journey up-river, then the rescue should come to Kurtz just when he is dying.

The manager depends on lies and plots to get rid of Kurtz, while at the Central Station, there is a pervading air of plotting among the pilgrims except that they have not really made it into a fact.

However, they were all waiting---all the sixteen or twenty pilgrims of them---for something; and upon my word it did not seem an uncongenial occupation, from the way they took it, though the only thing that ever came to them was disease---as far as I could see. They beguiled the time by backbiting and intriguing against each other in a foolish kind of way. There was an air of plotting about that station, but nothing came of it, of course. It was as unreal as everything else---as the philanthropic pretence of the whole concern, as their talk, as their government, as their show of work. The only real feeling was a desire to get appointed to a trading-post where ivory was to be had, so that they could earn percentages. They intrigued and slandered and hated each other only on that account—but as to effectually lifting a little finger---oh, no. (p. 39)

Though nothing comes of the "air of plotting," there is good reason to believe that these crazy pursuers of ivory will surely resort to the dirty means of lying and scheming as the manager does if someone stands in their way of success and wealth because greed for ivory and hatred to the natives have turned them into butchers.

B. Women's Illusions

While waiting for means to go to his trading post, Kurtz kills his time by painting a woman "draped and blindfolded, carrying a lighted torch. The background was somber---almost black. The movement of the woman was stately, and the effect of the torchlight on the face was sinister" (Conrad, 1981, p. 40). This painting can best describe women's circumstances. They are blindfolded and barred from the reality. Yet, different from the manager and the pilgrims who make lies and intrigues to secure their position and chances for promotion, the women characters, as Marlow believes, prefer to live in their world of illusions.

Before Marlow sets off for Africa, he pays a visit to his aunt who has helped him get that job through her relations. His self-contempt at relying on a woman evidently illustrates his patronizing view of women. "I, Charlie Marlow, set the women to work---to get a job. Heavens! Well, you see, the notion drove me" (p. 12). In any case, because of this aunt, he can gratify his fascination with that yellow region on the map, "Dead in the centre. And the river was there---fascinating---deadly---like a snake" (p. 15). As to the aunt, she is glad to be of help to Marlow partly out of her concern about Marlow's dream for that land and partly out of her noble conception that Marlow will go there as one of the Workers, "Something like an emissary of light, something like a lower sort of apostle" (p. 18). This aunt is totally inspired by the propagandizing claim of the government and keeps talking about "weaning those ignorant millions from their horrid ways" (p. 18). At this, Marlow cannot refrain his contempt toward women's ignorance. "It's queer how out of touch with truth women are. They live in a world of their own, and there has never been anything like it, and never can be. It is to beautiful altogether, and if they were to set it up it would go to pieces before the first sunset" (p. 19). From Marlow's perspective, women refuse to confront the world of facts, but would rather shut themselves in their self-created world of lies and illusions.

Another example of women confined to their own world is the two knitting women at the Company's headquarters. At the moment he enters the office, Marlow sees two women, "one fat and the other slim, sat on straw-bottomed chairs, knitting black wool" (p. 14). Their indifferent look and the older woman's "quick glance of unconcerned wisdom" (p. 16) invoke in Marlow "an eerie feeling"(p. 16) that the two women seem to be "knitting black wool as for a warm pall, one introducing, introducing continuously to the unknown, the other scrutinizing the cheery and foolish faces with unconcerned old eyes. *Ave*! Old knitter of black wool. *Morituri te salutant*"(p. 16). A metaphorical and mythical reading will associate the two knitting women with the Fates of Roman Legend: "Clotho and Lachesis, who spin the thread of

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each man's life which is to be cut by Atropos…and the fact that both women are thought of as 'guarding the door of Darkness' may evoke a fleeting memory of the Sibyl in Virgil's *Aeneid* who guards the door of the Underworld into which Aeneas is to venture" (Watts, 1977, p.53). While, if viewed non-metaphorically, the two women's unconcerned look is just a result of their 'professional' occupation with what they are doing. The young woman shows Marlow into the waiting-room without stopping her knitting. And when Marlow comes out of the waiting-room, they are still knitting black wool 'feverishly.' To them, where Marlow and other young men will go and what would become of them are none of their business. Their interest is only in their domestic chores. Like the aunt, they stay only in their own world, though it may be built on the basis of lies.

Of all the women characters, Kurtz's Intended will be most faithful to lies and will surely spend the rest of her life in the world of illusion. It is more than one year since Kurtz's death, yet the Intended would like to "remember and mourn for ever" (Conrad, 1981, p. 126). Her abiding admiration for Kurtz's nobility, eloquence and genius makes Kurtz a kind of god figure to her. Though Kurtz died, he still thrones in her mind. When she tells Marlow that Kurtz has the capacity of drawing men towards him by what is best in them, when she interrupts Marlow's words "It was impossible not to…" and eagerly finishes it by "love him"(p. 127), she seems to be winning Marlow over to idolize Kurtz as she does. It is an honor for her to be loved by such a great man, and she is proud of having all Kurtz's "noble confidence." She is convinced that Kurtz never betrayed their love and Kurtz died for his noble cause. When she talks, "her forehead, smooth and white, remained illumined by the unextinguishable light of belief and love" (p. 127). Before such a woman who is "one of those creatures that are not the playthings of Time" (p. 126), Marlow cannot harden himself as to tell her the truth of what Kurtz did in the Congo and what he pronounced on his deathbed. Therefore, when the Intended insists that Marlow repeat to her Kurtz's last words so that she could have something to live with, Marlow lies by saying that Kurtz's last words are her name. With Marlow's lies, the Intended could live forever in her fanciful world in which she could possess Kurtz's devoted love and take pride in Kurtz's contribution to the great cause of Belgian government.

Like the Intended, Kurtz's lover in African tribe, that savage and superb queen-like woman, is also cut off from the reality. Marlow sees her twice, and in both cases he detects in her something tragic, though she walks in a stately imposing manner. The first time she appears near the steamer, "Her long shadow fell to the water's edge. Her face had a tragic and fierce aspect of wild sorrow and of dumb pain mingled with the fear of some struggling, half-shaped resolve" (p. 103). The second time is when the steamer brings Kurtz back to the Central Station. Even if Marlow pulls the string of whistle to frighten the tribesmen away, the superb woman does not flinch. She "stretched tragically her bare arms after us over the somber and glittering river" (p. 115). She knows Kurtz will never return. But her tragedy is that she never knows the inner struggle of Kurtz between civilization and savagery, nor she knows Kurtz's revulsion and repulsion at this savage life. She can deceive herself by believing that Kurtz has been 'kidnapped' away and will live with memory of Kurtz's love as the Intended does.

All these female characters in *Heart of Darkness* are isolated from the real world, living in their own small world of ignorance. This isolation may on the one hand be seen as "human capacity for imaginative illusions, for escaping from the concrete" (Hawthorn, 1979, p. 33), and on the other hand may serve as an extension of the deceptive nature of imperialism. As Jeremy Hawthorn (1979) argues, "imperialism demands that sections of the domestic power retain their illusions, and thus the human relationships of that domestic power are impregnated by the lies of imperialism through and through" (p. 33). So when Marlow lies to the Intended, he indirectly becomes an accomplice of imperialism in that he helps create the lies and illusions upon which imperialism thrives.

C. Kurtz's Self-deception

Due to Kurtz's deathbed pronouncement and the ideas he embodies, *Heart of Darkness* is more often read as the tale of Kurtz than that of Marlow. Within the larger context of the unknown narrator's record of Marlow's purging experience in Africa lies Marlow's search for Kurtz, the life and death of the latter enlightens the former who then spreads the latter's voice to every living soul.

After Marlow comes to Africa, he finds that the name of Kurtz is on the tip of every tongue. The Chief Accountant, the manager and the brickmaker all claim that Kurtz is the most capable agent and will go far in his career. Marlow's interest in this man is thus aroused by their constant reference. Yet, at this stage, Kurtz only remains as a remarkable ivory collector. It is until he sees Kurtz's painting at the brickmaker's room that Marlow for the first time asks earnestly to know more about this man. In Kurtz's painting of the blindfolded woman holding a lighted torch, Marlow is amazed at his penetrating insight into the true nature of western civilization, which suddenly collapses at his stroke. More than that, Marlow seems to envision the pains of Kurtz when his ambition of lighting up the darkness can never be fulfilled within the context of colonialism. From that moment on, Kurtz becomes a mystery for Marlow to unravel, a voice to follow and an ally to defend.

Kurtz has artist's expressiveness, politician's eloquence, poet's passion and journalist's perception. More importantly, he is nurtured in European culture which holds itself superior to any other culture. Because of these characters working together in him, he enthusiastically answers the call of imperialism with an ambition to turn the savage Africa into a new land of civilization. At the beginning of his African experience, he dutifully writes a report for the International Society for the Suppression of Savage Customs. It is a 17 pages of eloquent and beautiful writing, which explicitly exhibits Kurtz's mind as a European and expresses his altruism. What is most impressive with this writing is its ending phrase 'Exterminate all the brutes!', which is "scrawled evidently much later, in an unsteady hand" (Conrad, 1981, p.

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84). The difference of time for writing this end and the "unsteady hand" to write it, together with the painting, fully evidence the change of Kurtz's perception. When he writes 'Exterminate all the brutes,' he has not only savage Africans in mind, but also his countrymen, his European fellows, even himself. Otherwise he would not have repeatedly pleaded with Marlow to take good care of this 'pamphlet' as "it was sure to have in the future a good influence upon his career" (p. 85). Kurtz has been exposed to the greedy side of colonialism and imperialism. The means the agents use to subdue the natives reveal to him the savage nature inhering in every human being. Placed among the dark beings and amidst the primordial forest, he also keenly feels the primitive force in him and yields to it. By exerting what is most dark in him, he becomes the first class agent who can make "as much ivory as all the others put together" (p. 30). The heads hung on the stakes near his house are a most direct, hard but cruel fact of Kurtz's ferocity. His own act is enough for him to see into the human heart as an abysmal fountain of evils.

Though he succumbs himself to wilderness, the power of civilization does not completely give away. That holy mission never escapes him. When he finds it futile to rely on any institution to carry out that noble cause, he decides to take it up himself. Therefore, when he is already on the way back to the Central Station, he suddenly decides to go back. As Kurtz later confesses to Marlow, he has immense plans. "I was on the threshold of great things," but the manager's coming interrupts his plan. "I'll carry my ideas out yet--- will return. I'll show you what can be done. You with your little peddling notions---you are interfering with me" (p. 104). The great plans in his mind are not material aspirations though he has made too much of them by his force, but that noble cause which has called him there.

Even if neither the Russian admirer nor Kurtz himself releases much information about the ways he will reach his goal, the readers can still gather some information from the Russian that the natives adore Kurtz. "They would not stir till Mr. Kurtz gave the word. His ascendancy was extraordinary. The camps of these people surrounded the place, and the chiefs came every day to see him" (p. 98). Obviously, Kurtz has made himself a god to the natives. As he suggested in his writings that European whites "must necessarily appear to them [savages] in the nature of supernatural beings---we approach them with the might as if a deity" (p. 84). Kurtz might believe that by becoming a divine figure, he will be able to impose his will and his concept of civilization onto his believers. Thus his beautiful design will become a reality. As Jacques Berthoud (1979) has pointed out:

what finally damns Kurtz is not the horror of the shrunken heads which decorate his house, nor even the ferocity of his raiding excursions, but what these things indicate, the appalling fact that he has taken upon himself the role of God. This is tantamount to saying that he has entered into a state of final self-deception. (p. 54)

Yet, the problem is that when Kurtz conceives himself as a god who can 'swallow all the air, all the earth, all the men before him" (Conrad, 1981, p. 101), he is oblivious of the paradox of his plan, that is when he uses force to subjugate the natives and make them worship him, he is unconsciously engulfed by the power of darkness. At the time he becomes a god, he also turns to be a devil.

IV. Marlow's Hatred of Lies

When the manager, the brickmaker and the pilgrims tell lies to clear off the obstacles in their way of success and fortune; when the women live in their world of illusions as an escape from the harsh reality; when Kurtz creates a lie about himself as a god figure to make it a necessary step of his grand design, Marlow endeavors to break the lies of the people and of imperialism, but sometimes he is also trapped in lies.

Many times in his narrative to the four listeners on the Nellie, Marlow claims that he prefers to facts and admires simplicity:

You know I hate, detest and can't bear a lie, not because I am straighter than the rest of us, but simply because it appalls me. There is a taint of death, a flavor of mortality in lies---which is exactly what I hate and detest in the world---what I want to forget. It makes me miserable and sick, like biting something rotten would do. Temperament, I suppose. (Conrad, 1981, p. 44)

Because of this temperament, he feels so uncomfortable when his noble-minded aunt talks about his holy mission and he has to make her know that the company he will work for is a business concern. Also, the plotting air at the Central Station disquiets him so much that he turns his back on that station and engages himself in his repair work. "In that way only it seemed to me I could keep my hold on the redeeming facts of life" (p. 37). Only in work can one have the chance to know himself, to know his own reality. Work does not cheat as words do. As Berthoud notices, "There is, to be sure, an essential difference between Marlow, who has passed the test of the sea, and so can distinguish between words and deeds, professions and performances, and the agents of the exploitative company he encounters in the Congo" (p. 44). This explains why Marlow values more the Russian Harlequin's book than Kurtz's report. Kurtz's report is beautiful and eloquent, but it is "too high-strung," full of burning noble words. While the Russian book titled *An Inquiry into some Points of Steamship*, despite its plain matter with illustrative diagrams and repulsive tales of figures, strikes Marlow as an extraordinary find. "I handled this amazing antiquity with the greatest possible tenderness, lest it should dissolve in my hands…Not a very enthralling book; but at the first glance you could see there a singleness of intention, an honest concern for the right way of going to work"(p. 63). Both the report and the book are works of written words, but what differs them is that the report is closer to an eloquent speech of a European colonizer, and the book is a simple true-to-life document of the real work.

No matter how detestable and mortal lies sound to him, sometimes Marlow intentionally involves himself in lies. At

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least he lies twice. In his confrontation with the brickmaker, Marlow learns that the brickmaker believes that both he and Kurtz have influential backgrounds back in Europe and if possible he hopes Marlow to say something nice of him to Kurtz. Marlow does not deny his unfounded supposition, instead he lets the brickmaker talk on and even assures him that rivets are also what Mr. Kurtz wants. This lie works. The brickmaker writes to the Outer Station for the supply of rivets. The second time happens when he meets the Intended. Marlow lies to her about Kurtz's last words. Unlike other liars who are unreflective of their words, Marlow is tortured with a sense of guilt. After his first lie, he turns immediately to his work so that he could hold onto the "redeeming facts of life." After the second lie, he feels that "the house would collapse before I could escape, that the heavens would fall upon my head" (p. 131). But nothing happens. In the light of the humanitarian concern underlying these two lies and his self-reproach, Marlow should be spared from criticism. And Marlow's case seems to point to one fact that no one can escape from lies.

V. Conclusion

In consideration of Marlow's persistent search for Kurtz and his voice, the journey into Africa is Marlow's journey of knowledge. Kurtz's deathbed pronouncement "The horror! The horror!"(Conrad, 1981, p. 118) initiates Marlow into reflecting upon the nature of colonialism and western civilization, the nature of humanity and human perception of their nature. In the meantime Marlow through his personal experiences and observations is also shocked into the knowledge of another horror: that is lies fill our life.

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Critical Thinking in Language Education

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***Abstract*—Critical thinking, rooted in critical philosophy, has long been an influential part and parcel of Western education. The present study is an attempt to sketch the concept of critical thinking as a viable cornerstone in language education. First, a number of the definitions of the concept as posited by different scholars are put forth. Second, the typical features of critical thinkers are introduced from the perspectives of education scholars. Third, different standpoints on the teachability of the ability to think critically are reviewed. And finally, a number of classroom techniques, including debates, media analyses, problem-solving tasks, self-assessment and peer-assessment, likely to foster critical thinking skills in language classrooms are proposed.**

***Index Terms*—critical thinking, education, language**

I. Introduction

Honing critical thinking skills in learners has been of significant research interest and one of the dominant research areas in educational contexts in various countries. Education psychologists, such as Thomas &Smoot (1994) and Huitt (1998) have pronounced that critical thinking is a very important element of schooling in the 21st century. Huitt (1998) stipulates that in the information age, *thinking* plays a significant role in one's success in life. He goes on to say that the movement toward the information age has shifted attention to good thinking as a significant element of life success. These changing conditions require new outcomes, such as critical thinking, to be embarked upon as a focus of schooling. Old standards of simply being able to score well on a standardized test of basic skills, though still appropriate, cannot be the sole criterion based on which to judge the academic success or failure of students.

In a similar vein, Chaffee (1985) and Paul (1995) mention that enhancing students' critical thinking abilities is the core of meaningful education. Chaffee (1985) explains that meaningful education halts students from involving in the unreflective learning of information, and equips them with the tools necessary to understand thoroughly the world they are in.

For a variety of reasons (Fok, 2002), some teachers believe that critical thinking cannot be taught, and some think that it does not need to be taught deliberately explicitly. Although some teachers support the idea of teaching students critical thinking abilities, they feel that they don't have the capacity or confidence to do it. In addition, contextual constraints such as those imposed by exam-oriented cultures and the heavy emphasis placed on the rote learning of facts and information to excel on tests may exert a harmful effect on the students' overall development including their development of creative and critical thinking abilities.

II. Critical Thinking Defined

The past decade or so has witnessed the release and dissemination of a variety of books and articles on *Critical Thinking*. There is widespread consensus that the instruction of critical thinking is an all important issue standing in need of further research (Appleby, 2006; Halpern, 2002). However, psychologists and language methodologists have difficulty putting forward a precise and rigorous definition of critical thinking. That's why Halanon (1995) states that "critical thinking scholarship is in a mystified state. No single definition of critical thinking is widely accepted" (p. 75). Along the same lines, Minnich (1990) asserts that critical thinking is a "mystified concept" (p. 5). Fasko (2003), too, is aware of such indeterminacy when he asserts that 'there is no consensus on a definition of critical thinking' (p.8) in psychology, education or philosophy, and indeed the definitions of critical thinking have been changing (Huitt, 1998).

Siegel (1988) points out that 'despite widespread recent interest in critical thinking in education, there is no

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clear agreement concerning the referent of the term' (p.5), but he mentions that the notion of critical thinking has to be delineated with some precision for it to have significant impact on educational thinking and practice.

Reviewing the many definitions of critical thinking, Siegel (1988) identifies two rather different conceptions of critical thinking running through the related literature: the 'pure skills' (p.6) and the 'skills plus tendencies' (p.6) conceptions of critical thinking. According to Siegel, the 'pure skills' conception of critical thinking concentrates entirely upon a person's ability to assess correctly or evaluate certain sorts of statements. A person is a critical thinker, from this viewpoint, if she has the skills, abilities, or proficiencies necessary for the proper evaluation of statements. However, as Siegel (1988) illuminates, this conception is incomplete because it overlooks the salience of the actual utilization of these skills and abilities in a person's everyday life. The impact of this conception of critical thinking on the educational context could be less than promising if students drew upon critical thinking in tests only to get good grades in exams but not outside the testing context. Siegel (1988) argues that critical thinking needs something more than skills.

Siegel (1988) calls the second conception of critical thinking the 'skills plus tendencies' (p.6) conception, resting on the idea that "a critical thinker has both the skills or proficiencies necessary for the proper assessing of statements (and actions), and also the tendency to exercise those proficiencies in their ordinary statement- (and action-) assessing activities" (p.6). Following this view, a person is a critical thinker, if he or she is able and ready to think critically. As Siegel (1988) mentions this conception of critical thinking extends critical thinking beyond the skill of assessing statements and actions. There are also significant dispositions, values and traits that a critical thinker needs to develop.

[The second conception of critical thinking] concerns the characterization not simply of a set of cognitive skills or criteria of reasoning assessment, but more importantly of a certain sort of person. To recognize this is to recognize the depth of the concept of critical thinking, and the importance of character, values and other moral dimensions of the concept. (Siegel, 1988, p. 10)

Siegel (1988) goes on to propose the two central components of this conceptualization of critical thinking that would be particularly prominent in educational contexts. The first one is 'the ability to assess reasons properly which is referred to as the "reason assessment components" (p.23). The second one is the "critical attitude or critical spirit" (p.23) component of critical thinking. It is "the willingness, desire, and disposition to base one's actions and beliefs on reasons; that is to do reason assessment and be guided by the results of such assessment" (p.23). Siegel asserts that 'both components are essential to the proper conceptualization of critical thinking, possession of which is essential for the achievement of critical thinking by a person" (1988, p.23).

Some authors believe that these differences could partly be attributed to different terms used to offer an unequivocal definition of the concept of critical thinking. For example, Atkinson (1997) points out that a variety of definitions of critical thinking have been offered and that they differ to some degree. On the contrary, Davidson (1998) argues that if one scrutinizes these definitions, it is easy to notice large areas of overlap. The definitions are, in fact, often simply paraphrases of the same idea. They simply link critical thinking to rational judgment. Siegel (1988) calls critical thinking "the educational cognate of rationality" (p. 32). Alternatively, Lipman (1991) defines it as healthy skepticism, whereas Norris and Ennis (1989) call it "reasonable and reflective thinking that is focused upon deciding what to believe and do" (p. 3). Taking a similar path, Halpern (2003) defines critical thinking as "the use of those cognitive skills or strategies that increase the probability of a desirable outcome….thinking that is purposeful, reasoned, and goal oriented" (p.6). In like manner, Bensley (1998) defines it as "reflective thinking involving the evaluation of evidence relevant to a claim so that a sound conclusion can be drawn from the evidence" (p.5). Diestler (2001) believes critical thinking is "the use of specific criteria to evaluate reasoning and make decisions" (p.2). In a similar vein, Levy(1997) defines critical thinking as " an active and systematic cognitive strategy to examine, evaluate, understand events, solve problems, and make decisions on the basis of sound reasoning and valid evidence" (p. 236).

Paul (1985) also defines critical thinking as "learning how to ask and answer questions of analysis, synthesis, and evaluation" (p. 37). Along the same line of inquiry, Brookfield (1987) believes that critical thinking encompasses two interconnected processes, namely, "identifying and challenging assumptions, and imagining and exploring others" (p.229). Pithers and Soden (2000) agree that critical thinking involves a number of abilities such as identifying a problem and the assumptions on which it is based, focusing the problem, analyzing, understanding and making use of inferences, inductive and deductive logic, and judging the validity and reliability of assumptions and sources of data.

Critical thinking can also be described as the scientific method applied by ordinary people to the ordinary world (Schafersman, 1991). This is true since critical thinking is aligned with the well-known method of scientific investigation: a question is posed and a hypothesis formulated, germane data are sought and gathered, the hypothesis is further tested on the basis of the data, and conclusions are made at the end of the process. All the skills of scientific investigation map onto critical thinking abilities. So, critical thinking is scientific thinking.

Although all the above-mentioned definitions differ in scope and emphasis, they all place a premium on both the process and the outcome of learning. The ultimate objective for teaching critical thinking is to help students make correct judgments based on the careful weighing of available evidence. However, critical thinking is a very intricate endeavor. Buskist and Irons (2008) mention that such an enterprise requires students to learn several subtasks which include, among others:

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a. Developing a skeptical approach to problem solving and decision making;
b. Breaking down problems into their simplest outcomes;
c. Searching for evidence that both supports and refutes a given conclusion;
d. Maintaining a vigilant attitude toward their personal bias, assumptions, and values that may interfere with making an objective decision.

Still some other researchers (Atkinson, 1998; Benesch, 1993) emphasize the social and democratic aspects of critical thinking. They believe that social practice is one of the indispensable components of critical thinking. Atkinson (1998) strongly explicates that critical thinking is cultural thinking. However, he is dubious as to whether it can be taken for granted, and he further mentions that language educators should embark upon its adoption judiciously and cautiously. He states four reasons for this speculation:

Critical thinking may be more on the order of a non-overt social practice than a well-defined and teachable pedagogical set of behaviors; (b) critical thinking can be and has been criticized for its exclusive and reductive character; (c) teaching thinking to nonnative speakers may be fraught with cultural problems; and, (d) once having been taught, thinking skills do not appear to transfer effectively beyond their narrow contexts of instruction. (p. 71)

In like manner, Fox expresses concerns as to the cultural load of the concept of critical thinking:

This thing we call "critical thinking" or "analysis" has strong cultural components. It is more than just a set of writing and thinking techniques— it is a voice, a stance, a relationship with texts and family members, friends, teachers, the media, even the history of one's country. This is why "critical analysis" is so hard for faculty members to talk about; because it is learned intuitively it is easy to recognize, like a face or a personality, but it is not so easily defined and is not at all simple to explain to someone who has been brought up differently. (Fox, 1994, p. 125)

Benesch (1993) emphasizes that critical thinking is not simply higher order thinking; instead, it is a quest for the social, historical, and political roots of conventional knowledge and an orientation to transform learning and society (Brookfield, 1987; Shor & Freire, 1987). Conversely, Davidson (1998) casts doubt on the social dimension of critical thinking. He criticizes Atkinson (1998) arguing that critical thinking appears to be something more universally relevant than just a social practice. If some cultures vary in their present ability to appropriate the tools of critical thinking, it is probably only a difference in the degree to which critical thinking is endured in certain parts of life. In any case, part of the task of the ESL/EFL teacher is to prepare students for the world outside their societies. There is even evidence that many students are ready for and in need of critical thinking abilities.

Viewing critical thinking as an inherently social and cultural concept, Oster (1989) concedes that social and cultural illuminations necessary to fully grasp its features. He admires the Western education system for its being open to a plurality of views, and encouraging originality and analysis, rather than memorization and quotation. He stipulates that if students are to enter an American or European university, they must be taught to think like the members of the target community, not to presume things to be universal when they are culture-sensitive, to feel free to express their thoughts and experiences and to find value in so doing. To these ends, he offers the study of the target language literature and its analysis as a safe and promising ground for developing critical thinking skills in foreign or second language learners.

III. Critical Thinkers and Their Characteristic Features

How would you know who a critical thinker is? Buskist and Irons (2008) felicitously assert that critical thinkers do not have "CT" tattooed on their foreheads, nor do they put on t-shirts labeled with "I'm a critical thinker". They demonstrate a welter of behaviors and skills that are quite conspicuous in situations requiring problem solving. A great body of literature (Bensley, 1998; Diesther, 2001; Fisher, 2001; Halpern, 2003; Levy, 1997; Birjandi & Bagherkazemi, 2010) highlights that critical thinkers are those who , among other features:

- have a strong intention to recognize the importance of good thinking;
- identify problems and focus on relevant topics and issues;
- distinguish between valid and invalid inferences;
- suspend judgments and decisions in the absence of sufficient evidence;
- understand the difference between logical reasoning and rationalizing;
- be aware of the fact that one's understanding is limited and that there are degrees of belief;
- watch out for authoritarian influences and specious arguments;
- anticipate the consequences of alternative actions;
- accurately explain their decisions;
- consider alternative explanations for any state of affairs;
- curb their emotional reactions to others' arguments;
- determine the truth or falsity of assumptions;
- develop and present reasoned and persuasive arguments;
- distinguish between primary and secondary sources of information;
- distinguish credible from non-credible sources of information;
- differentiate evidence from opinion, common sense, anecdotes, and appeals to authority;
- distinguish opinions from facts;

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- draw inferences;
- formulate and ask appropriate questions;
- gather data from multiple sources relevant to a problem to be solved or a decision to be made;
- identify their preconceptions about important issues;
- understand the use and abuses of mathematical and statistical information in decision.

It needs to be emphasize that critical thinkers can also be characterized as enjoying the following features:

- they can listen attentively to others and provide them with appropriate feedback;
- they can assess and evaluate statements;
- they have a keen sense of curiosity;
- they have a strong proclivity to substantiate statements;
- they are open to criticisms;
- they are malleable;
- they can self-assess themselves

Undeniably, all such qualities are essential to what teachers reveal to students about their particular academic disciplines as well as to how students negotiate problems in everyday life. Surely, if there is one skill that college should hone in students, it is how to apply what they learn in their classes in their everyday life. Sadly, academic settings have put too much emphasis on "what to think" rather than "how to think". Schafersman (1991) mentions that we are really adroit at transmitting the content of what we teach to our students but often fail to teach them how to think critically and evaluate effectively. Children are not born with the power to think critically, nor do they develop this ability beyond survival-level thinking in the absence of implicit and explicit instruction. Critical thinking has to be learnt, so teachers are all called upon to enhance in learners the ability to think critically.

IV. Critical Thinking: How Teachable is it?

Based upon the two conceptualizations of critical thinking, i.e. 'pure skills' and 'skills plus tendencies' (Siegel, 1988, p.6), approaches to the teaching of critical thinking can be of two types: (1) the teaching of critical thinking refers to teaching students trainable and assessable reasoning skills and processes, and (2) the teaching of critical thinking means teaching students those trainable and assessable reasoning skills as well as cultivating in them the dispositions and awareness associated with critical thinking. Engaging students actively in critical thinking processes through the effective use of teacher questions, discussion and reflection in a context that supports critical thinking and values inquiry, and teachers' practicing of critical thinking skills and attitudes and explicit explanations of the significance of critical thinking could help students to develop both the critical thinking skills and their associates critical attitudes.

In terms of language teaching, using provocative and inferential questions to ameliorate students' critical thinking in the teaching of reading and writing is not uncommon. Cook (1991), who regards reading primarily as a thinking process, emphasized the importance of engaging students in talking about the text they read. In like manner, Elder and Paul (2004), who consider critical thinking as the art of close reading, point out that 'to learn well, one must read well' (p.37). They emphasize the importance of engaging oneself in constant questioning in the reading process. Following Elder and Paul (2004), Paul (2005) states that 'a critical mind improves reading by reflectively thinking about what and how it reads' (p.32). Similarly, in terms of writing Elder and Paul (2005) point out that revision of drafts both cognitive and meta-cognitive thinking processes and thus writing could help enhance the students' critical thinking.

Regarding the teaching of critical thinking as the teaching of a set of generic reasoning skills, such as deductive and inductive reasoning, Solon (2003) conducted a controlled experimental study that aimed to investigate the impact of different critical thinking instruction approaches on the critical thinking test scores of community college students. The findings of the study revealed that 'different levels of treatment can lead to significantly different levels of improvement' and that 'the critical thinking course intervention had more impact than the infusion approach' (Solon, 2003, p.36). In the study, three groups of community college students reported to share similar educational backgrounds and different critical thinking abilities received different amounts of critical thinking instruction. The first group of students underwent a critical thinking course in which standard logic and reasoning were focused on. In the course, a great deal of class time was spent on argument analysis and small group discussion. Students were also required to keep a reflective journal of the weekly critique they made on the items that they selected from the mass media. The second group of students attended a psychology course in which about 25 percent of class time involved critical thinking-related instruction and activities. The students in this group were also required to complete some critical thinking assignments. Only some of these assignments were graded according to critical thinking principles. The last group of students was a control group, receiving no critical thinking instruction at all. Solon's (2003) study indicated that, regarding the teaching of critical thinking as some generic reasoning skills, it is important to engage students actively in different critical thinking processes, such as analysis of ideas, discussion and reflection through writing as well as making explicit to students the significance of critical thinking.

In a similar line of inquiry, Yuretich (2004), who viewed the teaching of critical thinking as the teaching of some higher order reasoning skills, such as, analysis, synthesis and evaluation, conducted an experimental study to find out the extent to which active learning strategies improve students' critical thinking in large introductory classes in an

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American university. Through active learning strategies, students were given opportunities to process and evaluate information through discussion with fellow students. Yuretich (2004) highlighted that giving students a critical thinking opportunity, for example, allowing them the time to pause, reflect on, analyze and discuss an issue in a context that supports and values critical thinking, is indeed the key to critical thinking education.

Higher-order reasoning or critical thinking can be woven into a large enrollment class, but their inclusion requires moving beyond the traditional lecture and exam mode. Active learning methods offer the best solution. When students really ponder a question, discuss it in groups, or explain their answers to others, they are more likely to use skills at the more advanced levels of Bloom's Taxonomy. (Yuretich, 2004, p.44)

Similarly, Elder and Paul (2003) point out that turning students into active questioners is an important part of critical thinking education. They concede that it is important for learners to keep asking questions in the learning process, stressing that 'to learn well is to question well' (p.36). In terms of meaningful learning, Elder and Paul put forth various question types for students to ponder upon during their learning process. They also encompass questions that motivate students to approach an issue from various different aspects and levels, such as inquiring into the purpose, information, interpretation, assumption and implication of an issue.

Deep questions drive thought beneath the surface of things, forcing you to deal with complexities.

1. Questions of purpose force you to define tasks.
2. Questions of information force you to look at your sources of information as well as assess the quality of information.
3. Questions of interpretation force you to examine how you are organizing or giving meaning to information.
4. Questions of assumption force you to examine what you are taking for granted.
5. Questions of implication force you to follow out where your thinking IS going,
6. Questions of point of view force you to examine your perspective and to consider other relevant viewpoints.

(Elder and Paul, 2003, p.36)

Upon the review of literature done, the arguments for teachers to capitalize on questioning to augment students' critical thinking are strong. However, Bourdillon and Storey (2002) cautioned that teacher questions have to be handled appropriately to avoid common questioning errors in the teaching context. For instance, students are given too little mediation and thinking time to respond to challenging questions. They are not given the opportunity to ask questions and to contribute to the classroom discourse. According to Bourdillon and Storey (2002), genuine communication should be targeted in class and students' ideas should be heard, respected and considered carefully. However, Smith (1990) states that students should be engaged in the critical thinking process based on respect rather than power or exploitation, stressing the importance of teachers in modeling and practicing critical thinking and critical attitudes in critical thinking education.

Children learn to think critically when they have the opportunities and reason to think in critical ways; when they see (or hear) other engage in critical thinking; and when they are admitted into arguments, challenges, and debates based on respect rather than power or exploitation. (Smith, 1990, p. l07)

Some educators have pronounced not only the need for students to actively participate in the critical thinking process, but also the need for students to be aware of what they are learning and why they are learning critical thinking (Bourdillon and Storey, 2002). In a similar line of inquiry, Mayfield (2001) emphasized the importance of this awareness in students' critical thinking development, pinpointing that teachers should make clear to students the processes that they are engaged in and the aims they hope to reach through critical thinking.

People already know how to do many complex kinds of thinking [...] All of us developed our own way of solving problems, using "street smarts" and common sense or even trial and error. Yet what we already know can be substantially strengthened by conscious attention. (Mayfield, 2001, p.8)

As far as classroom teaching is concerned, Mayfield (2001) goes on to explicate that a possible way to raise students' awareness of critical thinking is to involve them explicitly in critical thinking opportunities and in dialogue with others so that they could contemplate upon their own thinking and be cognizant of their thinking processes through asking questions and discussion.

It has been suggested that for various reasons, teachers still draw on traditional teaching approaches in many local classrooms. They impart knowledge to their students and students are deprived of the opportunity to genuinely discuss and exchange ideas in the class.

The teachers were still influenced by the traditional way of teaching, that is, they were too conscientious in imparting knowledge to students and giving the correct answers and students were not given too much room for free discussion. At times, when they disagreed with the answers given by teachers, there was not enough time for them to discuss this difference. (Fok, 2002, p.88)

Fok (2002) points out that equipping students with some rudimentary ideas in differentiating facts from opinions, i.e. the 'pure skills' conception of critical thinking, is far from adequate for critical thinking education (Siegel, 1988, p.6). Instead students need to develop various critical thinking skills as well as critical attitudes so that they would be able to evaluate critically their own opinions and ask critical questions about the world they are in.

What is more important is to develop students' attitude as a critical thinker: that is, to evaluate their own

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opinions and to ask questions about their beliefs and judgments. This is the most important and the most difficult part. (Fok, 2002, p.90)

Buskist and Irons (2008) explicate different reasons for which teachers and students feel reluctant to think critically some of which are enumerated as follows:

a. The outcomes of reasoned decisions do not map onto their personal preferences. In other words, sometimes students desire to engage in a particular behavior overpowers their reasoning as to why such behavior may or may not be beneficial.

b. Some students are used to being told what to do and when to do it. This particularly applies to students who come from backgrounds in which other people (parents, teachers, coaches, and other authority figures) have made decisions for them. Thus from these students' perspective, there is no apparent reason to think critically when others do all the thinking for them.

c. Having other people make decisions relieves students of responsibility. This is on a par with the notion of just following orders: "Because somebody tells me what to do, and I do it, I should *not* be held accountable for my actions—I was just doing as I was told."

d. From a sociopolitical perspective, some students may think that their judgment is inferior to that of an authoritative figure. Many students come from backgrounds in which they are instructed to "obey authority," which implies that "I am not ready to make decisions on my own—I need to look to older, wiser, and more informed people to tell me what to do."

e. Some students are accustomed to learning the information by heart rather than thinking about it. Memorizing facts and figures takes time and effort, to be sure, but it does not require the uncertainty that goes with thinking.

f. Some students may undermine the consequences of their decisions. These students may have never had to encounter the genuine consequences of poor decision making before because somebody else has always been there to protect them from those consequences.

g. Some students don't have time to allocate to genuine critical thinking. In addition to carrying a full academic load, some students raise families and work in part-time or full-time jobs while working on their degrees. These students often believe that they don't have the time to take classes that require a lot of out-of-class work such as writing papers, preparing presentations, and other assignments that require thoughtful preparation and the integration of knowledge.

h. Some students lack the basic topical knowledge needed for critical thinking. They simply do not have the academic background (they lack basic foundational knowledge) to understand, let alone analyze, integrate, and apply the subject matter they are currently "learning."

Buskist and Irons (2008) go on to explain that just as students feel apathetic to think critically, teachers may intensify such avoidance by failing to implement critical thinking as part of their courses. Most college and university teachers are motivated to teach their students to think critically, but to do so is an arduous task and demands a great deal of accountability and commitment. Developing intellectually challenging activities, problem-based scenarios, and other rigorous assignments is a critical thinking task in its own right. Although many teachers are enthusiastic to defy the challenge, there are several reasons for which teachers do not feel like teaching students to think critically:

a. Academia can be a demanding and time-consuming profession that often requires a delicate balance of teaching, service, and research. When time is scarce, teaching preparation may focus on other, more pressing obligations.

b. Some teachers may shy away from teaching critical thinking because they cannot easily assess the consequences of their teaching efforts to show that they have been effective. As teachers, we often rely on grades as indicators that students have learned and that we have done our job. It is not as easy to assess critical thinking skills as to assess the typical course content, so one can't tell if students are learning the critical thinking skills we try to teach them.

c. Because students often loathe being coerced to think critically and teachers want to be admired by students, some teachers may sacrifice critical thinking in their classes in exchange for popularity.

d. Since some teachers are not critical thinkers themselves, nor do they know how to teach the skills of being critical, and they may not feel comfortable enough with their own skills to ask their students to think critically. Holding a master's degree or a Ph.D. does not guarantee that one can think critically.

In spite of these student–teacher obstacles to teaching critical thinking, teachers can learn to develop classroom environments conducive to critical thinking. Having enumerated different reasons for teachers and students' resistance to implementing critical thinking, Buskist and Irons (2008) put forth five main suggestions for teaching critical thinking:

a. For each and every core topic in your class, provide students with problems to analyze or solve. It doesn't matter whether you ask students to tackle these problems in or out of the class—the important thing is that they have the opportunity to think critically about them.

b. Guide students in the development of their critical thinking skills with handouts (either paper or electronic) containing information about critical thinking techniques that you have found particularly effective in your quest to solve problems and make informed decisions (e.g., explain what it means to "consider alternative explanations" or "weigh the evidence" or "determine the truth or falsity the assumptions").

c. Take time in class to apply these methodologies to your subject matter so that you can model effective critical thinking for your students. Your teaching should provide your students with the opportunity to see critical thinking in action through a role model—you!

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d. You should bring to class some of those everyday examples of critical thinking (or lack of critical thinking) that you've been collecting since before the academic term started. Make sure the examples are relevant to your subject matter.

e. Give your students plenty of opportunity to practice their developing critical thinking skills, including examinations and other graded assignments. If you don't test it, many students won't study it. Besides, it makes good sense to test students on those key elements of the course that you stress as important—in other words, you should put your money where your mouth is!

The authors of the present study propose a couple of techniques that effectively work in EFL/ESL milieus since they enjoy a high degree of universality and practicality. These techniques include debate, problem solving, self-assessment assignments, and peer assessment assignments.

A. Debate/Forum/Discussion

Since debates are versatile and consequential in the range of topics and the format, they can inspire students' enthusiasm to critically contemplate upon topics from different perspectives. The debates could perpetuate in the optimal outcomes provided that:

a. the topics are mainly controversial;
b. the topics are of relevance to the class and the subject matter;
c. the topics are interesting and motivating;
d. students know the discussion topics in advance;
e. students are given enough time to mull over the topic from different angles;
f. students have enough opportunities to express themselves freely and critically.

B. Media Analysis

Having been informed about the sociopolitical and cultural dimensions of critical thinking, the authors have found media analysis quite beneficial in that students' awareness can be easily raised about issues such as equality, discrimination, bias, censorship, marginalization, etc providing that the abovementioned benchmarks are taken into consideration.

C. Problem Solving Tasks and Activities

One of the distinguishing features of critical thinkers is to be able to raise questions and find pertinent answers for them on the basis of reliable evidence. The process of finding contingent resolutions is premised upon thinking critically. To do so successfully, students need to work in pairs and groups to describe the content of discussion, to define the problem, to personalize the problem, to discuss the problem and its alternative solutions, and finally to evaluate the whole process.

D. Self-assessment & Peer-assessment Assignments

The substantial issue at hand is that teachers often overlook their students' potentialities and susceptibilities. If teachers continue to disregard learners' views and opinions, or suppress them without ever giving them the opportunity to express themselves, then they will not be able to train and use their thinking skills. So, one way to alleviate the problem is to engage them in carefully guided self- and peer-assessment. Students should be given a chance to assess not only themselves but also others to enhance their critical thinking ability.

V. Conclusion

Upon an in-depth review of the existing literature on critical thinking, it is highly recommended that teachers assist their students to become effective critical thinkers, i.e. to help them acquire both the critical thinking skills and critical attitudes to deal with the changes and challenges given rise to be the information age. In terms of classroom teaching, teachers' effective use of questions, involving students in discussions on challenging and motivating topics and different forms of reflection conducted on the basis of respect could engage students in meaningful critical thinking processes. Moreover, a context that supports and values inquiry and a teaching and learning atmosphere that respects different and sometimes competing viewpoints are crucial in facilitating students' critical thinking development. Such practical techniques as debates, problem-solving tasks, self-assessment and peer-assessment can also be helpful. Finally, teachers' own in-class application of critical thinking skills and attitudes, and providing explicit explanations of the importance of critical thinking could also help students enhance critical thinking.

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An Assessment of Indian Writing in English as a Source for Learning English in Rural India

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***Abstract*—The vogue of English has given rise to the emergence of a new learner whose demands and ambitions are much more based on his interest than those of his counterpart in the past. Teaching English through Indian Writing in English (IWE) as source material may certainly meet the needs of learners in rural India. Teaching English through IWE is possible because it caters to the learner's interest and liking in rural India. A textbook should be designed in respect to meet the needs of the learner. The learner becomes passive participant when the textbook is against his will and liking. "Even today, in quite a few states even at the intermediate/higher-secondary/first year B. A. level, poems by Keats: La Belle Dame Sans Merci (neither the teacher nor the students can pronounce even the title properly), Wordsworth's Daffodils (which nobody has seen in India) or poems about the courtly love games of the idle European feudal classes like To His Mistress by Andrew Marvell are prescribed (N. and Lalita Krishnaswamy, 2003)". Thus, a textbook that does not respond to the liking and interest of a learner can prove a total failure.**

***Index Terms*—Indian writing in English, source material, rural India**

I. Introduction

This paper states that Indian Writing in English (IWE) can be a source for teaching and learning English in rural India at under graduate level. This innovative method of learning English can be beneficial for several reasons. In first place, many Indians in rural areas are strictly related to traditional belief systems; secondly, their identity is rooted in the pride of being Indian and in such condition it becomes more important to love what is Indian; thirdly, the learners from rural parts can perform well in other subjects like History, Economics, Political Science, Sociology and others. These subjects offer them the materials from Indian scenes, situations and milieus, which seem to be the point of their attraction (Appendix-A). On the other side, in the present era, the significance of English Language has increased more than ever. Everyone, today, is eager to acquire the knowledge and competency of English to stay ahead in this competitive world. English performs a key role in all lifestyles today. Broadly speaking, English has been accepted by almost all the Universities in India as a significant medium of Education. In such situations, teaching English effectively and interestingly has become more important than ever. In fact, IWE can prove as an effective source for learning English.

II. Precondition of English in India

English came to Indians as the language of the oppressors and decorated the Indian crown of glory, prestige and dignity. Today, English has entered the hearts and minds of Indians and become the part and parcel of Indian culture. It took long period for Indians to give a native identity to English language. On the other hand, the second language status of English in Indian educational system has prevailed nearly for half and a century. Considering the importance, place, status of English at international level, the young generation of India is fascinated by its use in all spheres of everyday situation. Especially, learners in rural India have recognized that the knowledge of English provides lots of prospects and opportunities. Nowadays, English has become the concrete means of livelihood of millions.

Indians are interested to reflect their culture and civilization of which they are proud of by inculcating the skill of this language. Basically, India is a land of a wide variety of religion, castes, attitudes, traditions, superstitions and beliefs. Therefore, Indians want to mould English on their own soil with a self-stamp. In such conditions, a question arises in the mind that can Indian Writing in English be an effective tool for teaching English?

British Rule brought English in India and percolated it in Indian society when Lord Macaulay introduced it for the first time by establishing Educational institutes. Indians, by and gradually, were attracted to it and with the passage of time they started reading, speaking and comprehending English. They began writing in English too. Ample of literary forms have been handled by Indian writers writing in English. Thus, English flourished at the hands of different writers who wrote in various forms such as novels, dramas, poetry, short stories etc. In fact, they earned a separate identity to their literature and coined some terms like Indo-Anglian, Indo-English, Indian English, and Indian literature, Indian writing, Indian fiction, and Indian poetry in English etc.

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Like American, African, Canadian, English Literature, Indian English Literature is a sincere attempt to represent India. The explosion of English in India formed a new generation and voice in which Indians speaks. Since Indian Renaissance, Indian writers writing in English have been making manifold contribution to the World literature.

III. The Founders of IWE

Of course, the line of founders of Indian Writing in English is too long to list here. However, starting from Ram Mohan Roy, Vivekananda, Ramatirtha, Henry Louis Vivan Derozio, Kashiprosad Ghose, Michael Madhusudan Dutt, Toru Dutt, Sri Aurobindo, R. Tagore, Gandhi, Radhakrishnan, Sarojini Naidu, R. K. Narayan, Raja Rao, Manohar Malgaonkar, Mulk Raj Anand, Khushwant Sing, Nissim Ezekiel, Vijay Tendulkar, A. K. Ramanujan, Kamala Das, Arun Kolatkar, Anita Desai, Girish Karnad, Vikram Seth, Shashi Deshpande, Salman Rushdie, Shoba De, Rohinton Mistry, Amitav Ghosh, Kiran Desai, Arundhati Roy, Jhumpa Lahiri, Namita Gokhale and many more contributed to Indian Writing in English.

Born in India, most of these writers wrote in English having their command on the native languages. It is really a challenging task to show commanding mastery on non-native language despite of their command on mother tongues. Initially, they were hardly sure to write on Indian subjects in English. But Englishmen like Sir William Jones, John Leyden, Sir Edwin Arnold, Meadows Taylor, F. W. Bain and many more lived in India for many years and wrote on Indian subjects in English. In fact, these Anglo-Indians cleared the way for Indians to consider English fit for Indian subjects. Indian Writing in English (IWE) is a sincere record of the rare gems of Indian situations, experiences, traditions and milieus. However, these traits in IWE can attract the attention of learners and prove helpful for learning English.

IV. Worth of IWE as a Source Material for Learning English

Almost each work in IWE has enough potential to impress an Indian sensibility. Indian subjects and themes may attract the attention of Indian learners and teachers of English. Tagore wrote primarily in Bengali, but due to his command over English, he translated many of his plays and poems into English. His *Chandalika* (1933) expresses his love for Buddhism and the Buddha as a spiritual power. Prakriti, the untouchable girl, falls in love with Ananda, the Buddha's best loved disciple. But Ananda has gone away. Prakriti asks her mother to apply spell on him so that he may return to her. He is brought to her hut but at the same time his face becomes ugly due to wrong procedure. Prakriti's victory becomes her defeat. She cries in despair and again asks her mother to release him from spell. Thus, the stress is on the spiritual action. Prakriti and her mother feel the transforming power of the pure in heart. Ananda feels angelic in compassion. This purification is only possible in the spiritual realm. *Gitanjali* (1912) is a devotional poetry by Tagore. It is written in Indian *bhakti* tradition. It is half a prayer from below and half a whisper from above. It reflects the basic experience, the longing, the trial, the promise, the realization. It is a record of Indian flavour and taste.

Sarojini Naidu's first collection of poems, *The Golden Threshold,* came out in 1905. In her poem *Palanquin Bearers*, the newly married bride is being carried in a palanquin to her husband's house. The bearers are singing a traditional folk song expressing two phases of her life - sorrow of departure and joy at the prospect of a new life. Indian sensuousness, various facets of Islam, patriotic note, various Indian festivals are found in her different poems.

R. K. Narayan's *Swami and Friends* is the story of ten-years old boy, Swaminathan, full of joy, innocence, wonder and mischief, and his experiences growing up in the fictional town of Malgudi. The story begins with Swami, attending his monotonous schooling in Albert Mission School. Rajam, son of a police officer joins his school and the dispute that occurs between Rajam and Mani who is also Swami's friend and thereafter the steady friendship between Swami, Rajam and Mani. The novel expresses conflict between Indian and Western culture. It chronicles an extroverted Schoolboy's rebellion against his missionary upbringing. His characters are ordinary people who rely on Hindu principals.

Raja Rao's *Kanthapura* (1938) reflects Gandhi's impact on a South Indian Village through the chatty language of an elderly widow. The story-teller is a grandmother**.** Of course, the art of story telling is second nature to the Indian grandmother. Mulk Raj Anand's *The Untouchable* (1935) describes the problem of the rooted untouchability. The narrative begins with the description of outcaste colony – a group of mud walled houses outside the town – which is a symbol of traditional practice of untouchability. Bhakha, the protagonist, hates his lot. He is humiliated even in upper class Hindu colony. Nissim Ezekiel has written a collection of *Very Indian Poems* in Indian English. His poem *Goodbye Party for Miss Pushpa T.S.* reflects the syntactical oddities of Indian English. The poem tries to depict the characteristic Indian attitudes in Swadeshi Angrezi. He employs present continuous tense instead of simple present. His faulty use of indefinite articles and the use of *no* to enforce a point show typical Indian attitude.

A. K. Ramanujan's first volume of English poems *The Striders* appeared in 1966. His *A River*, a poem is on the river *Vaikai* which flows through *Madhurai***.** Every summer it dries *to a tricle* and no one speaks about pitiable loss of life. They sang *only of the floods*, but not about human beings. The poem reveals the materialistic attitude of the modern minds. Another outstanding poet is Kamala Das who published her autobiography *My Story* in 1976. The predominant theme of *My Story* is the difficulty of being a woman in Indian society and finding love in the institution of the arranged

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marriage. She felt a sense of loneliness which continued in her married life where she faced a male – oriented world of sex and lust.

Vijay Tendulkar's *Sakharam Binder* (1972) remains his outstanding play for its bold societal theme of the male dominating the female in every sphere of life. Sakharam, a bookbinder, takes in a succession of women who have been thrown out of their homes by their husbands. He offers them food and shelter in exchange for domestic services. He fiercely opposes the hypocrisy in the institution of marriage. Though he takes pride in the forthright nature of these unions, he is ultimately overpowered the potent and sometimes violent force of the bonds that develops.

In Anita Desai's *Fasting, Feasting* (1999), Uma, a daughter without look and talent, is ill-treated by her parents who overlook the aspirations of their daughter and pay attention on their only son. She has to stop her study in order to look after her baby brother Arun. It relates the disastrous attempts of an Indian daughter to leave her parents' home and achieve independence without marriage. Vikram Seth's *A Suitable Boy* (1993) deals with the search for a suitable bridegroom by Mrs. Rupa Mehara for her daughter. Her search ends when her daughter meets Haresh Khanna. Beyond match making, the novel further deals with the social panorama of the decade. The stories of different families are gathered to create this panorama. Further, the novel gives rise to the discussion on the Zamindari Abolition Bill, religious festivals and rituals etc.

In Shashi Deshpande's *That Long Silence* (1988), the narrator Jaya, an upper middle class housewife in Bombay, with two teenage children, is forced to take stock of her life when her husband has been caught in malpractice. As a result, they shift into their old house in Dadar. She remembers her past happy days and feels unsatisfied with her married life. Now she becomes a very submissive woman and longs to be called an ideal wife. She now has only silence and surrender.

Mahesh Dattani's Final Solution first performed in Banglore in 1993. It foregrounds the Hindu-Muslim problems. Dattani could not find final solution to these problems of communial riots, disputes and hatred. The novel also deals with the theme of transferred resentments in the context of family relations. Smita, unable to express her love for Babban, criticizes her mother bitterly. She hates praying and fasting. Her mother accuses her of running away from religion. The characters in the play are shown expressing their anger at every stage.

A glimpse into the works of Indo-Anglian writers shows the reflection of Indian ethos and milieu which can touch the hearts of Indians and win their appreciation. In addition, a study of such and other works may be of great help to the teachers and the learners of English. Therefore, it is essential to see that such Indian ethos and milieu really attract the attention of Indians and teaching English through IWE may be possible.

V. The Location of the Research

To meet the objectives of the research, the entire investigation has been carried out on certain methodology. The location of the research is the colleges affiliated to *Sant Gadge Baba Amravati University, Amravati, Maharashtra, India* where most of the colleges are located in rural areas. A well- planned *Questionnaire* has been prepared to see that whether teaching English through IWE may be possible or not.

VI. Teachers' and Learners' Response

The paper earnestly attempts to find teachers' and learners' response to IWE and an assessment of its worth as a source for teaching and learning English on the basis of a questionnaire applied at UG level in near about twenty colleges affiliated to *Sant Gadge Baba Amravati University, Amravati, Maharashtra, India*. With the help of the above mention questionnaire, 40 teachers and 60 learners at under graduate level in total 20 colleges have been found responding affirmatively to teach and learn English through IWE (Appendix- A & B). In fact, from the above mentioned survey, the response of the teachers and learners to teach English through IWE is positive to some extent. Hence, IWE may serve as an effective tool for teaching and learning English in rural India.

VII. Conclusion

The paper analyzes founders of IWE in order to know the value of English in India to non-native speakers in the beginning and how they begin to learn English. It seems that Indians succeed in the aim. Then it can be possible to learn English through IWE in rural India to some extent. IWE reflects Indian ethos and milieu which can touch the hearts of Indian readers for only native can feel these ethos and milieu. The learners can perform well when the text offers them the material of their interest and liking. They can do well in English like other subjects (Appendix-A). Moreover, a study of such and other works may be of great help to the teachers and learners of English.

Besides, Meditation, contemplation and reflective thinking have always been encouraged in learning English. To create a proper environment and encourage critical interaction with text is essential to develop critical thinking and contemplative power among learners. Learner from rural India can think and contemplate in English when he is given the text of his liking especially a text from IWE (Appendix-A). The meditation done in this way makes permanent impression upon the mind of the learner and leads him to that state of mind where he has ample chances to learn English.

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APPENDIX A QUESTIONNAIRE FOR LEARNERS

[1] Name ……
[2] Class (in which you are studying presently) ……
[3] Your Birth Place …… (Town/village)
[4] Where are you studding presently?
…… (Town/village)
[5] Do you like to attend the English class regularly? Yes/No
[6] Which class do you like to attend regulsrly? [Please tick mark]
O History O Sociology O English O Other
[7] Which text does help you most to comprehend the knowledge of English? (Below are given the names of literatures Indo-Anglian and English. Rate your preference on a three-point scale: Very Well 1, Well 2, a little 3. Put a circle round the number that applies to you)

Text	Very Well	Well	A Little
British Literature	1	2	3
Indian English Literatue	1	2	3
American Literature	1	2	3

[8] Which following poet do you like to read most? [Please tick mark]
O Robert Frost O William Wordsworth O Nissim Ezekiel
[9] Do you find it easy to learn English through IWE?
Yes (……) No (…….) I don't know (……..)

APPENDIX B QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHERS

[1] Name ……
[2] Classes to which you are teaching presently ……
[3] Your Birth Place …… (Town/village)
[4] Where are you teaching presently?
…… (Town/village)
[5] Which text does create more interest and enthusiasm among the learners while teaching English? (Below are given the names of literatures Indo-Anglian and English. Rate your preference on a three- point scale: Very Well 1, Well 2, a little 3. Put a circle round the number that applies to you)

Text	Very Well	Well	A Little
British Literature	1	2	3
Indian English Literatue	1	2	3
American Literature	1	2	3

[6] Which following poet do you prefer to read and teach most? [Please tick mark]
O Robert Frost O William Wordsworth O Nissim Ezekiel
[7] Do you find it easy to teach English through IWE?
Yes (……) No (…….) I don't know (……..)

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The Effect of Text Familiarity on Iranian EFL Learners' Listening Comprehension

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***Abstract*—Listening is an active process in which a listener selects and interprets information which comes from auditory and visual clues in order to define what is going on and what the speakers are trying to express. It involves both linguistic and non-linguistic knowledge. Linguistic knowledge relates to knowledge of phonology, lexis, syntax, semantics, discourse structure, pragmatics and sociolinguistics, whereas non-linguistic refers to knowledge of the topic, the context and general knowledge about the world and how it works. This article investigates the effect of text familiarity on listening comprehension. The paper focuses on two main issues. First, it investigates the effect of text familiarity on listening comprehension of Iranian EFL learners. Second, it investigates the influence of text familiarity on some aspects of the language. Sixty students who were studying in English Translation at the Islamic Azad University of Lahijan, Iran participated in this study. After comparing the pretest and posttest scores, it was indicated that Iranian EFL learners got substantially higher scores after the treatment. The findings showed that text familiarity has a considerable impact on listening comprehension of Iranian EFL learners.**

***Index Terms*—text familiarity, listening comprehension, Iranian EFL learners**

I. Introduction

Listening plays a significant role in the lives of people. Of the four major areas of communication skills and language development--listening, speaking, reading, and writing--the one that is the most basic is listening. It is evident that children listen and respond to language before they learn to talk. When it is time for children to learn to read, they still have to listen so that they gain knowledge and information to follow directions. In the classroom, students have to listen carefully and attentively to lectures and class discussions in order to understand and to retain the information for later recall. Listening is not only the first of the language arts skills developed, it is also the skill most frequently used in both the classroom and daily life. Clearly, much of the educational process is based on skills in listening. Students have to spend most of the time listening to what the teacher says, for instance, giving lectures, asking questions, or telling directions. In a language classroom, listening ability plays a significant role in the development of other language arts skills. When students first learn a language, they generally have to listen to the words several times before they are able to recognize and pronounce those words. Listening can also help students build vocabulary, develop language proficiency, and improve language usage (Barker, 1971). Cayer, Green, and Baker (1971) find that students' ability to comprehend written material through reading as well as to express themselves through speaking and written communication are directly related to students' maturity in the listening phase of language development. Dunkel (1986) asserts that developing proficiency in listening comprehension is the key to achieving proficiency in speaking. Not only are listening skills the basis for the development of all other skills, they are also the main channel through which students make initial contact with the target language and its culture (Curtain & Pesola, 1988).

Despite the importance of listening practice in language instruction, English language classes in many countries still emphasize only the skills of reading and writing. This is especially the case of an English-as-a-foreign-language (EFL) situation in which the English language is taught as a subject at school and used only inside, but not outside, the classroom. EFL students are studying English in their home countries where English is not the dominant native language. Students who are from environments where English is not the language of the country have very few opportunities to hear the real language; these students therefore are not accustomed to hearing the language as it is produced by native speakers for native speakers. Consequently, students from the countries in which English is taught as a foreign language frequently have great difficulty understanding English spoken to them when they come into contact with native speakers of the language. A few problems that hinder listening comprehension are as follows: unfamiliarity of topics/texts, lack of socio-cultural, factual and contextual knowledge of the target language. Background knowledge plays an important role in interpreting meaning, as this forms a foundation for listeners to connect new information to their existing knowledge. Background knowledge relates to our real world experiences and

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expectations that we have. In this study, the researchers investigate the effect of text familiarity on listening comprehension concerning two questions. First, it investigates the effect of text familiarity on listening comprehension of Iranian EFL learners. Second, it investigates the influence of text familiarity on some aspects of the language.

II. Literature Review

Listening comprehension is the process of understanding speech in a second or foreign language. The study of listening comprehension processes in second or foreign language learning focuses on the role of individual linguistic units (e.g. phonemes, words, grammatical structures) as well as the role of the listener's expectations, the situation and context, background knowledge and the topic (Jack C. Richards, John Platt, Heidi Platt, 2000). One of the main reasons for getting students to listen to spoken English is to let them hear different varieties and accents --- rather than just the voice of their teacher with its own idiosyncrasies. In today's world, they need to be exposed not only to one variety of English (British English, for example) but also to varieties such as American English, Australian English, Caribbean English, Indian English or West African English (Jeremy Harmer, 1998).

According to Strevens (1990), reading, listening, speaking and writing are four major skills in English study. They are closely connected and interact with each other. It's impossible to communicate if you do not listen well and people seldom write well without reading. Very often a language user involves in using a combination of skills. Our ultimate aim is to foster the students' ability to communicate. If their listening is poor, it will have a negative effect on the fulfillment of the other requirements for reading, speaking and writing. Therefore it's important for teachers to help students to improve their listening comprehension. However, careful observation of school English teaching practice has found that the teaching of listening skills is still the weak link in the language teaching process. Despite students having mastered the basic elements of English grammar and vocabulary, their listening comprehension is often weak. Through systematic study of basic English teaching stages at university, it has been recognized that while students' integrated skills in reading, writing and translating, have been improving, their listening and speaking capabilities have been left behind. The key factor that has been recognized in the preliminary studies is students' limited listening comprehension.

Foreign language listening comprehension is a complex process and crucial in the development of foreign language competence; yet, the importance of listening in language learning has only been recognized relatively recently (Rost, 2002). Since the role of listening comprehension in language learning was either overlooked or undervalued, it merited little research and pedagogical attention in the past. But at present, some researchers have devoted some time to listening and believe it to be an important skill in teaching and learning. For instance, Nunan (1998) believes that, "listening is the basic skill in language learning. Without listening skill, learners will never learn to communicate effectively. In fact over 50% of the time that students spend functioning in a foreign language will be devoted to listening" (p. 1). Listening has been given little attention in the English language classroom. This could be due to the fact that there has been a lack of research interest into listening. Furthermore, listening has often been considered as a passive skill which learners just "pick up". Teachers believe that exposing students to spoken language is sufficient instruction in listening comprehension (Miller, 2003). Previous research has identified a few problems that hinder comprehension to take place. Anderson & Lynch (2000) state that one of the reasons why the listener fails to process incoming speech is that the speech contains words or phrases that the listener can hear adequately but is unable to understand because of serious problems with the syntax or semantics of the language. This is a common problem faced by students as the topics that they have to listen to often contain new or unfamiliar words. Another problem is the lack of background knowledge on the topics discussed. Lack of socio-cultural, factual and contextual knowledge of the target language can also present an obstacle to comprehension because language is used to express culture (Anderson & Lynch, 2000). This indicates that background knowledge plays an important role in interpreting meaning, as this forms a foundation for listeners to connect new information to their existing knowledge. Background knowledge relates to our real world experiences and expectations that we have. This knowledge is very important when we consider the language processing problems of students. Listening then is not only concerned with identifying the linguistic features of the text but also with matching speech with what the listener already knows about the topic. In the process of listening, comprehension can only occur when the listener can place what he hears in a context. If the listener knows something about the speakers and his intention, comprehension is much easier. Familiarity with the text makes listening easier for the listener as he is able to relate to his own background knowledge (Gebhard, 2000).

Long (1990) highlighted the need to investigate how background knowledge affected auditory comprehension in L2. Results from a survey, recall protocols, and a checklist administered to 188 students enrolled in university Spanish courses showed that background knowledge could help L2 listening comprehension, and that linguistic knowledge played a prominent role in comprehension when appropriate background knowledge was not available to L2 listeners. However, she also found that students who possessed very good linguistic knowledge overextended the pre-stored background knowledge onto a new set of data that were clearly incongruent. That is, she noticed that activated background knowledge could result in dysfunctional effects on comprehension, which indicated that good listeners had a tendency to abandon linguistic knowledge in favor of the familiar schema. Similarly, Chiang and Dunkel (1992) provided two lectures regarding Confucius and The Amish for 388 Chinese listeners in order to assess the effects of prior knowledge of lecture topic and speech modification on the listening comprehension. They found that Chinese EFL

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listeners scored higher in their post lecture multiple-choice comprehension test that contained both passage-dependent and passage-independent items, when they listened to the familiar-topic lecture (Confucius) than when they listened to the unfamiliar-topic lecture (The Amish). However, a significant effect of prior knowledge was found only on the passage-independent items, which resulted in an interesting insistence that only passage-independent items can provide a measure of a listener's prior knowledge for language comprehension. Learners' performance on passage-dependent items did not differ significantly whether the familiar or unfamiliar topic was presented. The effect of prior knowledge itself on comprehension of information from the passage remains unclear.

Schmidt-Rinehart (1994) conducted a research project relative to the interaction between topical knowledge and L2 listening comprehension. Arguing that the effect of background knowledge itself on listening comprehension remains unclear when it is related to L2 listening ability, she extended the research of Long (1990) and Chiang and Dunkel (1992) by adding proficiency level as a variable. Ninety first, second, and third quarter university students of Spanish classes (three levels of proficiency) participated in this study and the immediate written recall-protocols were administered. The results showed that topic familiarity affected the scores of the recall measures, and that the means of the course-level groups had a consistent increase in comprehension scores across the three levels. However, the results also indicated no interaction between the two variables, topic familiarity and course level (L2 listening proficiency), revealing that all students, regardless of their course levels, scored higher on the familiar passage.

The effect of prior knowledge on lecture listening comprehension was also measured by Hansen and Jensen (1994) and Jensen and Hansen (1995). Hansen and Jensen (1994) hypothesized that a test could be biased in favor of listeners with prior knowledge. Two lectures (history and chemistry) were prepared for listening tests and 235 university level L2 learners were recruited. Of the 235 learners of L2, only 30 learners reported prior knowledge of the non-technical lectures (history lecture) and only eight learners reported the experience of studying the topic of chemistry. When prior knowledge was added as a predictor of performance on the listening test, Hansen and Jensen found that prior knowledge of the history topic did not improve listening scores, whereas prior knowledge was a significant factor to the prediction of test takers' performance on the chemistry test. Later work about the effect of prior knowledge on the 11 lectures, Jensen and Hansen (1995) posited that the accessibility of prior knowledge on specific topics in lectures is determined by listening proficiency. Results from multiple regression correlations revealed that listening proficiency of 128 university level L2 learners had a significant main effect for all 11 lecture performances, whereas prior knowledge had statistical significance for 5 of 11 lectures. In addition, the examination of interaction between listening proficiency and prior knowledge for lecture listening showed that 10 out of 11 lectures have no significant interaction, which indicated no support to the hypothesis that listening proficiency moderates the effect of prior knowledge. An interesting finding in this study was that the effect of prior knowledge was more likely to show up for technical lectures than for non-technical lectures although the effect size was small. Jensen and Hansen concluded that prior knowledge does not significantly attribute to L2 academic lecture comprehension, and that further investigation would be needed to investigate the reason prior knowledge is more likely to affect technical lecture comprehension.

Hohzawa (1998) found, by studying 58 Japanese English learners, that listeners with high prior knowledge understood more familiar text than unfamiliar text and more proficient L2 listeners understood more than less-skilled listeners in either familiar or unfamiliar text. Students were assigned to a background-information group (experimental group) and to a no background-information group (control group). A proficiency test was given to measure their prior knowledge about the topics of three news stories. Students in the experimental group discussed the content of the stories briefly after the introductions to the news stories were provided. Collected scores from a written recall-protocol and a comprehension test revealed that students who lacked background information tended to produce more instances of inaccurate recall of the text or distortions, which was similar to findings of Markham and Latham (1987).

III. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to identify the problems of Iranian EFL learners in listening to a text. The researchers conducted this study to investigate whether listening comprehension of EFL learners could be improved by the background knowledge or not. Listeners use both bottom-up (linguistic knowledge) and top – down processes (prior knowledge) to comprehend a text (Vandergrift, 2002). Therefore, knowing the context of a listening text helps the listener to reduce the burden of comprehension. The researchers were also interested in finding out if text familiarity affects listeners' language output. This was done to understand the effect of familiarity with a text on the comprehension of that text. This study aimed at facilitating the listening comprehension of texts for Iranian EFL learners. There are two main questions for this study:

1) What is the effect of text familiarity on Iranian EFL learners' listening comprehension?

2) How does text familiarity affect language output?

The participants of this study are sixty students who were studying in English Translation at the Islamic Azad University of Lahijan, Iran. Students have at least one listening comprehension course for four hours in a week. Their listening comprehension is tested in both the mid-term and final examinations. If texts are familiar for learners, they would be able to cope with them easily. However, if they have no background knowledge on a specific text, they may not be able to show their listening comprehension. So, teachers should focus on providing the listeners with specific knowledge required for comprehending the listening text rather than just focusing on linguistic aspects.

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IV. Methodology

A. Subjects

This research was conducted at the Islamic Azad University of Lahijan, Iran. The participants of this research were students of the English Translation Group from Islamic Azad University of Lahijan, Iran and they are currently in semester two. New Interchange 2 is one of the university courses for these students and it is taught over a period of 15 weeks. Classes are held every week. Students from two English Translation classes participated in this study. The participants of this study were sixty students of English majoring in English Translation. They were students between 17 and 22 years of age.

B. Materials and Procedures

The purpose of this research is to investigate the effect of text familiarity on listening comprehension of Iranian EFL learners. An unfamiliar listening text was chosen for learners. The selected listening text was entitled "Pollution." This listening text was taken from the New Interchange book. The choice of the listening text was significant because it should be both unfamiliar in content to the learners and at the same time appeal to them. If learners listen with a purpose and listen to their interesting materials, they will be motivated to listen and pay attention to them. Due to the fact that listening performance is strongly affected by motivation and memory effect, the texts should be both interesting and short. Four teachers were chosen to determine the suitability of the content of the listening texts for this study. This listening experiment was conducted over a three-month period. All the tests and treatment lessons were conducted during the New Interchange 2 class for four hours per week. Planning for the listening experiment was as follows: Week 1: Pre-test/Week 2: Treatment Lesson/Week 3: Treatment Lesson/Week 4: Treatment Lesson/Week 5: Post-test.

The students listened to a text entitled "Pollution**.**" In the pre-test, they answered 10 questions related to this passage. There were four multiple choice questions, five True/False questions and one open-ended question. Multiple choice questions were chosen because the scores are determined and reported objectively. Multiple choice questions should focus on the important aspects of the text and the answers be derived from the text without much reliance on student's prior knowledge (Mead & Rubin, 1985). Open-ended comprehension question acts as activators of knowledge as they give the students the freedom to select and organize relevant information (Oded & Stavans, 1994). Sixty students from two different classes participated in this study. All these students had completed the New Interchange 1 in their first semester. Before the experiment was conducted, these students were given a placement test to determine their proficiency level of English. The results showed that the students from both classes are of the same proficiency level. A week later, the pre-test was conducted. Since this pre-test was conducted in both classes at the same time, both the researchers and the teacher discussed the procedures involved in conducting the pre-test. They gave clear instructions to the students. Students listened to the tape twice. This was very important for learners to retrieve information for the second time they had missed out the first time. The teacher was reminded to stop playing the tape at the end of each part in order to give the students enough time to complete writing their answers. In this test, students listened to a text which contained information that they were not familiar with. The test was conducted simultaneously in both classes.

After the pre-test was administered, the treatment lessons were conducted over four weeks. The materials for these three treatment lessons were obtained from the same book as the listening passages. These passages were selected based on the students' proficiency. Each lesson was conducted for four hours a day for three successive weeks. The students did the required activities in pairs or groups. The activities in the treatment lessons activated learners' background knowledge. As listeners rely on their background knowledge for comprehending a test, it is beneficial for them to activate their background knowledge before the listening task takes place (Lingzhu, 2003). Activities such as pictures, maps and diagrams help learners comprehend unfamiliar texts (Nunan, 1999). In the treatment lessons, learners are given a lot of visuals to understand the concepts involved in pollution. Word association was used to determine what prior knowledge learners bring with them before they listen to a text. The final type of activity suggested by Lingzhu (2003) is giving ideas or suggestions. This activity encourages the use of words and phrases that students already know and thus motivate them to listen. Four weeks later, and after three treatment lessons, the post-test was administered. Both classes had the post-test at the same time. The same listening text entitled "Pollution" was used for the post-test and the students had to answer the same questions that they had answered earlier in the pre–test.

V. Findings and Data Analyses

In order to investigate the effect of text familiarity on Iranian EFL learners' listening comprehension, the scores from the pre-test and post-test were analyzed. The written responses were analyzed to check the quality of language output in the posttest. These analyses showed that text familiarity helped learners to understand the listening text. To answer the first question, learners' scores in the pre-test and post-test were analyzed. A t-test was conducted to find out if there was a significant difference between the learners' pre and post-test scores. The written responses of the subjects in the open-ended question were analyzed to find out if there was any improvement in the learners' answers in the post-test. This procedure was done to investigate the effect of text familiarity on language output. After the pre-test, an interview was conducted with four students to find out if they had faced any problems during the listening test. The purpose of this

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interview was to understand the effect of unfamiliarity with the text on the listeners' comprehension of Iranian EFL learners.

A. The Effect of Text Familiarity on Listening Comprehension

In the pre-test, the students were required to answer ten questions. There were four multiple-choice questions and six close-ended questions, which carried 16 marks. The open ended question in the final section carried 4 marks. Therefore, the highest possible score in the pre-test was 20 marks. The mean score in the pre-test was 4.11 with a standard deviation of 1.94. The minimum score obtained by the subjects was 8**,** while the maximum score was 17. The post-test was administered 3 weeks after the pre-test. The subjects were required to listen to the same text and answer the ten questions that they were given in the pre-test. Results show that there is a significant improvement in the subjects' scores. The mean score for the post-test was 4.15 with a standard deviation of 1.15. The minimum score obtained was 12, while the maximum score was 18. The results show that the higher mean score in the post-test is significantly different at $p< 0.01$. This significant improvement in the post-test is attributed to text knowledge that the subjects gained from the treatment lessons. In the pre-test, subjects were unable to determine answers to the comprehension questions as they faced a lot of barriers in the form of new vocabulary and pollution concepts. As they tried to overcome this, the process of interpreting the text was interrupted. Therefore, they could not identify the main ideas and information in the lecture that they needed to answer the comprehension questions. Successful comprehension in listening takes place when the listener has schematic knowledge, knowledge of the context and systemic knowledge (Anderson & Lynch, 2000). In the treatment lessons, the subjects had the opportunity to deal with key vocabulary items that were presented in the same context as they would hear in the lecture. Knowing the reasons of pollution gave the subjects a chance to put into practice their newly acquired knowledge on this text. This familiarity of text enabled the subjects to successfully identify the facts and details of the pollution, as well as details that support these main ideas. This ability facilitated their understanding of the text which explains why they performed significantly better in the post-test.

B. The Effect of Text Familiarity on Language Output

In order to measure improvement in language output, students' written answers in the pre and post-tests were examined qualitatively. Answers to the open-ended question were examined in order to find out if there was an improvement in the use of new vocabulary and phrases in the post-test. The background knowledge gained from the treatment lessons would be reflected if their answers in the post-test showed a better understanding of the text of pollution. All the written responses in the pre and post-test were examined for any differences in the quality of the language used. However, four subjects' answers are discussed in this section as they showed a major improvement in language output. The open ended question in the listening experiment was: *What is the definition of pollution? (4 marks)*

The four students' answers for the above question are presented below.

Question*:* What is the definition of pollution?

Answer*:* Pollution is the process of making air, water, soil etc dangerously dirty and not suitable for people to use.

Student 1: Ali

Answer in pre-test: Pollution affects our nature.

Answer in post-test: It has a negative effect on nature, human beings, and plants.

Ali has shown a better understanding of the concept of pollution in post-test because of appropriate vocabulary and ideas to define the word.

Student 2: Zahra

Answer in pre-test: no opinion

Answer in post-test: Pollution is an unwanted change in the environment by substances or forms of energy.

Zahra did not have any opinion about pollution in the pre-test. In the post-test, she could define the word pollution using the appropriate vocabulary that she had learnt before.

Student3: Hossein

Answer in pre-test: Is dangerous thing for everything.

Answer in post-test: Pollution is harmful materials or effects in the environment. It includes bad air such as carbon dioxide going into the air and making it smog.

Hossein has had an improvement in his post-test answer. Because he has used the terms such as harmful effects, carbon dioxide, and smog that he had already learned in the treatment lessons.

Student 4: Mohammad

Answer in pre-test: It causes harm, disorder, and discomfort.

Answer in post-test: Pollution is the entrance of contaminants into a habitat that causes harm, disorder, and discomfort to the living organisms in the habitat.

Mohammad has actually indicated his ability in understanding the term pollution in post-test. He has correctly identified the main ideas in the listening text.

Through examining students' answers, we see that their performance in post-test was much better than that of in the pre-test. This is due to the fact that they have gained new knowledge from the treatment lessons. In the post-test, learners were able to relate the gained knowledge to new input they had to process. As we know, prior knowledge helps

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the students to interpret the text more meaningfully. Because of this, the post-test answers show a significant improvement in the use of both vocabulary and knowledge related to the listening text.

VI. Conclusion

On the whole, the findings of this research showed that background knowledge has an important effect on the listening comprehension of Iranian EFL learners. If the EFL learners provided with background knowledge, they will be able to understand unfamiliar texts easily. Based on the findings, it can be concluded that appropriate instructions are necessary for improving listening comprehension. Teachers should focus more attention on their teaching methods and the listening processes rather than the listening test results. The other implication is that text familiarity is an important aspect in listening comprehension process. Learners with background knowledge can perform the listening activities much better than those who lack it. Background knowledge helps the learners to match new information with what they already know about the text. Teachers should prepare learners for the listening stages. The next implication of this study is that learners should be provided with the opportunity to use language for communication in a meaningful context in the class. To sum up, this research has indicated that text familiarity is a necessary factor in the comprehension of unfamiliar texts. The findings of this study would be beneficial for teachers, curriculum planners, testers, and text book writers to plan their materials and classroom activities based on a more effective approach to the teaching and learning of Iranian EFL learners' listening comprehension.

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A Cross-sectional Study of Iranian EFL Learners' Request Strategies

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***Abstract*—This study was a cross-sectional investigation into the request strategies used by Iranian learners of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) and Australian native speakers of English. The sample involved 96 B.A. and M.A. Iranian EFL learners and 10 native speakers of English. A Discourse Completion Test (DCT) was used to generate data related to the request strategies used by each group. The selection of request situations in the DCT was based on 2 social factors of relative power and social distance. Although the results revealed pragmatic development, particularly in the movement from direct to conventionally indirect strategies on the part of the EFL learners, the EFL learners with higher proficiency displayed overuse of indirect type of requesting, whereas the native group was characterized by the more balanced use of this strategy. The lower proficiency EFL learners, on the other hand, overused the most direct strategy type. In terms of the influence of the social variables, the findings of this research revealed that as far as social power is concerned, the EFL learners displayed closer performance to the native speakers. But considering social distance, it seems that the Iranian EFL learners had not acquired sufficient sociopragmatic knowledge to display proper social behavior.**

***Index Terms*—requests, social distance, directness level, politeness**

I. Introduction

Successful communication entails knowledge of grammar and text organization as well as pragmatic aspects of a second language (L2). Pragmatic competence is specifically defined by Koike (1989) as "the speaker's knowledge and use of rules of appropriateness and politeness which dictate the way the speaker will understand and formulate speech acts" (p. 279).

Austin (1962) defines speech acts as acts performed by utterances such as giving order, making promises, complaining, requesting, among others. When we utter a sentence or a phrase, we are performing an act to which we expect our listeners to react with verbal or nonverbal behavior (p. 65). According to Kasper (1984), what L2 learners must know for successful speech act performance has been presented in a "top down processing" manner: L2 learners first have to recognize the extra-linguistic, cultural constraints that operate in a native speaker's choice of a particular speech act appropriate to the context. They also have to know how to realize this speech act at the linguistic level and in accordance with the L2 sociocultural norms (p. 3).

The study of requests has attracted more attention in the study of speech acts. Considering Searle's (1969) classification of illocutionary acts (i.e., representatives, directives, expressives, commissives, and declarations), L2 researchers let requests fall under the second category, that of directives, which have been regarded as "an attempt to get hearer to do an act which speaker wants hearer to do, and which it is not obvious that hearer will do in the normal course of events or of hearer's own accord" (p. 66).

Based on Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness theory, requests are Face Threatening Acts (FTAs) since a speaker is imposing her/his will on the hearer (p. 65). Brown and Levinson (1987) propose that when confronted with the need to perform a FTA, the individual must choose between performing the FTA in the most direct and efficient manner or attempting to mitigate the effect of the FTA on the hearer's face. The strategy an individual chooses to employ depends upon the *weightiness* or seriousness of FTA. Weightiness is an assessment of the social situation calculated by the speaker (p. 76).

The speaker considers three variables when assessing weightiness. First, the speaker appraises the *degree of imposition* associated with the FTA. Brown and Levinson (1987) define the degree of imposition as "a culturally and situationally defined ranking of impositions by the degree to which they are considered to interfere with an agent's wants of self-determination or of approval" (p. 77). Second, the speaker considers the relative *power* of the hearer,

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defined as "the degree to which the hearer can impose his own plans and his own self-evaluation (face) at the expense of the speaker's plans and self-evaluation" (p. 77). Third, the speaker evaluates the *social distance* between the speaker and the hearer which Brown and Levinson (1987) call the "symmetric social dimension of similarity/difference within which "the speaker and hearer" stand for the purpose "of an act and the kinds of goods exchanged between them" (p. 76).

Blum-Kulka, House, and Kasper (1989 cited in Francis, 1997) distinguished three degrees of directness in requests, depending on the extent to which the illocution is transparent from locution: Direct requests, conventionally indirect requests, and non-conventionally indirect requests. In direct requests, the illocutionary force of the utterance is indicated by grammatical, lexical, or semantic means (e.g., "Leave me alone."). Conventionally indirect statements express the illocution via fixed linguistic convention established in the speech community (e.g., "How about cleaning up?"). Non-conventionally indirect requests require the addressee to compute the illocution from the interaction of the locution with its context (e.g., "The game is boring.").

The request strategies in the following classification are ordered according to decreasing degree of directness. Blum-Kulka et al. (1989 cited in Francis, 1997, p. 28) summarize a combination of level of directness and strategy types in Cross Cultural Speech Act Realization Project (CCSARP) as follows:

a. Direct level

1. Mood derivable: Utterances in which the grammatical mood of the verb signals illocutionary force (e.g., "Leave me alone.").
2. Performatives: Utterances in which the illocutionary force is explicitly named (e.g., "I tell you to leave me alone.").
3. Hedged performatives: Utterances in which naming of the illocutionary force is modified by hedging expressions (e.g., "I would like to ask you to leave me alone.").
4. Obligation statements: Utterances which state the obligation of the hearer to carry out the act (e.g., "Sir, you'll have to move your car.").
5. Want statements: Utterances which state the speaker's desire that the hearer carries out the act (e.g., "I want you to move your car.").

b. Conventionally indirect level

6. Suggestory formulae: Utterances which contain a suggestion to do something (e.g., "How about cleaning up?").
7. Query-preparatory: Utterances containing reference to preparatory conditions (e.g., ability, willingness) as conventionalized in any specific language (e.g., "Would you mind moving your car?").

c. Non-conventionally indirect level

8. Strong hints: Utterances containing partial reference to object or element needed for the implementation of the act (e.g., "The game is boring.").
9. Mild hints: Utterances that make no reference to the request proper (or any of its elements) but are interpretable as requests by context (e.g., "We've been playing this game for over an hour now.").

During the last decade, requests have been one of the most commonly researched speech acts in both cross-cultural and interlanguage studies. Cross-cultural pragmatic researchers have analyzed speech acts across a range of languages to investigate whether there are universal pragmatic principles in speech act realizations, and if so, what the characteristics of these universals are (Chen, 2007; Eslamirasekh, 1993; Rinnert & Kobayashi, 1999).

On the other hand, focusing on second language acquisition (SLA), many interlanguage researchers have studied differences and similarities that exist in carrying out communication actions among L2 learners and native speakers of an L2. Some SLA researchers explored the speech act of request in English (Francis, 1997; Kaneko, 2004; Kim, 1995; Parent, 2002). Other studies focused on request realization in Spanish (Ruzickova, 2007), and in Japanese (Kahraman & Akkus, 2007; Kubota, 1996).

Most of the studies mentioned above deal with interlanguage pragmatic performance (also see Garcia, 2004) while, as Rose (2000) notes, "unlike performance research, studying pragmatic development requires either longitudinal research with a given group of participants over an extended period of time, or cross-sectional studies with participants at various stages of development" (p. 29).

Among the above studies, only Francis (1997) and Parent (2002) attempted to examine developmental pragmatics by comparing data from L2 learners at various levels of proficiency while other studies were, in fact, "single-moment" research– they did not compare L2 learners at different levels of proficiency but, instead, just compared nonnative and native speakers (Rose, 2000, p. 29). These studies are capable of providing information regarding interlanguage pragmatics (ILP) performance, but they say nothing about development. They provide no information concerning the extent to which nonnative speakers will approximate native norms of speech act.

In addition, there is little information available about how lower proficiency L2 learners understand different kinds of requests and, in fact, they have been ignored in such studies. It is highly likely that lower proficiency L2 learners have problems selecting appropriate request strategies in different situations (Ellis, 1994). Therefore, concerning the importance of this area in L2 learning and teaching, this study sets out a cross-sectional research that surveys the development of request strategies by Iranian EFL learners at various levels of language proficiency. So, the current study attempts to (1) uncover the relationship between L2 learners' level of language proficiency and complexity of

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request strategies, and (2) find the possible difference in the type and frequency of the request strategies made by Iranian EFL students and native speakers of English based on social constraints of power and distance.

II. Methodology

A. Participants

The nonnative participants in this study were 96 B.A. seniors and M.A. students majoring in Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) and English Language Translation. The B.A. students had studied English for at least three years at Shahid Chamran University of Ahvaz and had passed several courses in grammar, reading, conversation, and writing up to the advanced level. So, it was assumed that they had enough proficiency in oral and written L2 production.

The M.A. students were studying at Center for Science and Research in Ahvaz at the time of study. They had already passed National M.A. Entrance Examination that focuses partly on subject specific courses and partly on English language proficiency. On the other hand, their M.A. courses required writing classroom papers, so they were supposed to enjoy a good command of the English language.

All the participants also sat for Nelson Language Proficiency Test (Fowler & Coe, 1976). They were, then, divided into three groups representing low, mid, and high L2 learners. Ten native Australian speakers of English also participated in the study via email. They were the employees of a company, and none of them had received any university degree.

B. Instrument

The instruments used in this study were Nelson English Language Proficiency Test (Fowler & Coe, 1976) and a Discourse Completion Test (DCT). The Nelson Test included 50 multiple-choice items covering grammar, vocabulary, and reading comprehension. According to Fowler and Coe (1976), all the items in this test have been carefully pre-tested and cover the most accurate means of measuring the general standard of English which forms the basis for specific skills, such as composition writing and comprehension (p. 7). Each item was assigned one point, and so the overall score was 50.

In a DCT, the speakers are given a scene or background information, such as what the previous speaker had said and the speakers' relationship with one another. Upon conducting the DCT in this study, 24 situations were given to the participants in written form based on relative power and social distance.

The power variable is treated as a ternary value, that is the hearer is either of lower status (+power), interlocutors are of equal status (=power), or the hearer is of higher status (-power). The distance variable is treated as a binary value, that is interlocutors either know each other (-distance) or they do not know each other (+distance). The combination of these two social variables results in 6 possible combinations, each realized in 4 situations which, thus, resulted in 24 situations (see Appendix for a sample questionnaire). The following table demonstrates the 6 variable combinations and the 24 situations:

TABLE 1.
POWER AND SOCIAL DISTANCE COMBINATIONS

Combination	P	D	Situations
A	=	+	turning down the music; asking for a pen; taking a photo; asking for an address
B	=	-	lending some money; asking for notes; asking for lotion; taking care of a child
C	+	+	asking for a menu; asking to be quiet; turning off the mobile phone; fixing the computer
D	+	-	closing the window; presenting the paper asking for some papers; staying more after store hours
E	-	+	asking for an interview; participating in the course; rearranging the exam's day; giving a lift
F	-	-	exchanging the shirt; asking for an extension; being out of work early; writing a letter

P: Power D: Distance

C. Procedure

First, the advanced test of Nelson (Fowler & Coe, 1976) was administrated to 96 of the participants, and the mean (M) and the standard deviation (SD) of their scores were calculated. The M score was 30.38, and the SD was 5.31. The participants whose scores fell between 0.5 SD (2.65) above or below M were considered as mid level; those whose scores fell above or below this area were regarded as high and low L2 learners, respectively. So, the participants were

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divided into three groups: 25 participants, representing the lower group; 43, the mid level; and 28, the high level students.

Next, their pragmatic competence was challenged on the effective use of request strategies by means of DCT in which they had to write down what they would say in the given contexts. Data from the native speakers of English was also gathered via e-mail. The DCT was sent to 25 Australian native speakers with whom the researchers were in contact, but only 10 were completed and returned.

To analyze the data gathered from the EFL learners and the native speakers of English, the particular coding scheme, the CCSARP was used. This coding scheme is a universally valid scale of directness, which had previously been empirically tested and successfully used by many researchers (Lwanga-Lumu, 2002; Wouk, 2006). The CCSARP schematized requesting strategies in 3 categories: Directness level, internal modification, and external modification. The focus of this study was on directness level of requesting strategies which was classified as a nine-point scale: *Mood derivable, Performatives, Hedged performatives, Obligation statement, Want statement, Suggestory formulae, Query preparatory*, *Strong hints*, and *Mild hints*.

The analysis of the data took into consideration only the head acts which were isolated and classified based on the 9 levels of directness. The data were, then, submitted to the SPSS (version 14.0) for frequency analysis and *chi square* test. The frequency analysis was conducted to identify the proportion and percentage of request strategies used by the nonnative and the native speakers in 6 combinations. Then, the data was classified into 3 main categories: Direct, conventionally indirect, and hints. And again, the frequency of the use of the above 3 main categories of request strategies was calculated. *Chi square* test was performed in order to establish whether the differences in the frequency of strategies made by participants were statistically significant.

III. Results and Discussion

A. Question One

In order to identify the type and frequency of request strategies made by EFL learners, the data was analyzed, and the frequency of occurrence and percentage of each category of strategies were calculated and tabulated in Table 2. In order to find the relationship between L2 proficiency levels of Iranian learners and the type and frequency of request strategies, the *Chi-square* test was applied. The result of this test is presented in Table 3.

The findings of this study provide some evidence of correlation between EFL learners' level of language proficiency and type of requesting. As illustrated in Table 2, conventional indirectness was the most frequent strategy by the three groups of EFL learners which was conveyed by only one indirect substrategy: *Query preparatory*. Almost exclusively, this strategy constituted more than half of all requests produced by the EFL learners.

Following Brown and Levinson (1987), higher levels of indirectness may result in higher levels of politeness. So, direct requests appear to be inherently impolite and face-threatening because they intrude in the addressee's territory (p. 17). More specifically, Blum-Kulka (1985 cited in Brown & Levinson, 1987, p. 19) suggests that in request at any rate, politeness and indirectness are linked for conventional indirectness requests but not necessarily in cases of non-conventional indirectness.

Hassall (2003) mentions formal simplicity as another factor that probably contributes to L2 learners' use of conventionally indirect strategy type. This type of *Modal* question is structurally simple, consisting minimally of *Modal verb+ Agent+ Verb* (e.g., *May I borrow*). So, L2 learners are unlikely to be discouraged by considerations of formal complexity in selecting this strategy (p. 1918).

Consequently, Trosborg (1995) remarks on the ability of learner subjects from all proficiency groupings in her study to use the conventionally indirect strategies of politeness. Interestingly, the present finding confirms and extends that of Trosborg (1995). It shows that even the low L2 learners are able consistently to select a polite, conventionally indirect strategy in the L2, when the L2 pragmalinguistic strategy form is formally simple and the same strategy exists in their first language (L1).

In general, the results of this study indicate that with increasing proficiency level, L2 learners use of direct requesting–mainly *Imperative*–decreases and, at the same time, conventionally and non-conventionally indirect types of requesting increase, while the lower level L2 learners overuse direct requests and the high and mid groups overuse conventional indirectness.

The fact that Iranian lower proficiency L2 learners use direct type of requesting more than other L2 learners can be explained by the notion of t*ransferability*. Interlanguage and cross cultural pragmatic studies have provided ample evidence that L2 learners' pragmatic knowledge significantly influences their comprehension and production of pragmatic performance in the L2 (Kasper, 1992; Takahashi, 1996). A pragmalinguistic transfer is the influence of the learners' knowledge about the illocutionary force or politeness value assigned to particular linguistic form-functions in their L1 which, when mapped by L2 learners into the perception and production of a similar situation in an L2, sounds different to native speakers.

Since Persian-speaking students use significantly more direct strategies compared to English speakers (Eslamirasekh, 1993), the low proficient L2 learners negatively transfer their pragmalinguistic forms of directness levels in request realization. That is, where more indirectness is demanded in English, they prefer direct strategies. In other words, to achieve requestive goals, the low proficient L2 learners in the present study may resort to a familiar and easy form of

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requesting, which has been experienced in their L1. The higher proficient L2 learners, on the other hand, are found not to transfer the Persian request strategies and, thus, pose more indirect strategy types in their interlanguage request. So, L2 proficiency is positively related to pragmatic transfer.

Concerning the correlation between complexity of request strategies and level of language proficiency in EFL learners, the findings of the present study, following other studies in this field (Francis, 1997; Harlow, 1990; Parent, 2002), support request development of L2 learners from being direct to indirect and from being simple to complex. On the one hand, there is a positive correlation between the use of indirect strategy types and the English proficiency level. In other words, the higher proficiency group used more indirect strategy types (both conventionally and non-conventionally indirect strategy) than L2 learners with lower language proficiency.

On the other hand, complexity of request strategies is explained in terms of direct strategies with forms that convey requestive force by purely syntactic means, such as grammatical mood or an explicit performative verb. Due to a strong concern with clarity, direct strategies may be considered as the most efficiently and easily expressed utterances. But in conventionally indirect strategies, the relationship between the surface form of an utterance and its underlying purpose is not straightforward. Again, requestive hints, as mentioned by Weizman (1993), tend to lack clarity and the speaker exploits their opacity while getting the hearer to carry out the implicitly requested act (p. 71).

Other substantial differences include lower L2 learners' reliance on *Imperative* strategy and other groups' tendencies for varieties of direct substrategies other than *Imperative* strategy. It is likely that higher proficiency L2 learners may have attempted to use as many strategies as possible in order to compensate for their lack of L2 proficiency, resulting in the use of different types of requesting. In contrast, the lower proficiency L2 learners are probably not sufficiently competent to use as wide a variety of strategies as the proficient L2 learners and, thus, they mainly rely on *Imperative* strategy. In other words, linguistic ability correlates with strategy use. The greater use of *Imperative* as the most direct type of requesting by the low L2 learners, as Harlow (1990) suggests, is also probably due to the linguistic deficiency or perhaps lack of attention to the rules of politeness (p. 335). They do not possess enough linguistic ability to employ other types of direct request, such as *Want statement* as frequent as the higher groups. So, it may be claimed that L2 learners with lower language proficiency show a particularly strong preference for *Imperative* because this subcategory, especially in elided form, does not demand high linguistic proficiency; it is formally very simple (e.g., *Give me the pen*.).

TABLE 2.
FREQUENCY AND PERCENTAGE OF REQUEST STRATEGIES BY EFL LEARNERS

Strategy	**Low F (%)**	**Mid F (%)**	**High F (%)**
Mood Derivable	181 (34.60)	119 (18.91)	238 (24.48)
Performative	0 (0)	7 (1.11)	7 (0.72)
Hedge	18 (3.44)	34 (5.40)	44 (4.52)
Obligation	2 (0.38)	1 (0.15)	12 (1.23)
Want Statement	16 (3.05)	41 (6.51)	47 (4.83)
Suggestory	1 (0.19)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Preparatory	290 (55.44)	396 (62.95)	570 (58.64)
Strong hints	15 (2.86)	28 (4.45)	52 (5.34)
Mild hints	0 (0)	3 (0.47)	2 (0.20)
Total	523	*629*	972

TABLE 3.
CHI- SQUARE VALUE OF EFL LEARNERS' REQUEST STRATEGIES

	Value	**Sig.**	**df**
Chi-Square	90.98	18	0.000

$p < 0.05$ Critical Value = 28.8

B. Question Two

Addressing the first part of the second research question, concerning request strategies made by Iranian EFL learners and Australian native speakers of English, the study presents the results of comparison between the native and the nonnative speakers. As indicated in Table 4, all groups displayed a markedly high frequency of conventionally indirect strategy conveyed by *Preparatory* substrategy. However, while the mid and high groups displayed an inclination toward the use of this particular strategy, the native group was characterized by a more balanced use of conventional indirectness. The low group, on the hand, extraordinarily used the most direct type of requesting, that is, *Imperative*.

The considerable use of conventionally indirect strategy by both the native and the nonnative speakers may be due to the influence of Western language usage with regard to speech act theory. Previous studies (Leech, 1983; Searle, 1969) have mentioned that indirect speech acts correlate with politeness in Western cultures because Western language usage is fundamentally associated with negative politeness (Brown & Levinson, 1987).

The results of this study are consistent with the findings of previous studies, such as Byon (2004). First, they support the view that advanced L2 learners appear to develop greater sensitivity to the use of politeness strategies in requesting

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than is seen in native speakers. Second, the study supports Ellis's (1994) idea that even advanced L2 learners do not acquire fully native-like ways of requesting.

On the one hand, the higher proficient EFL learners in the present study employed more conventionally indirect strategies than the native speakers. On the other hand, Brown and Levinson (1987) and Leech (1983) make a strong connection between the indirectness and politeness, arguing that a higher degree of indirectness shows more politeness. More specifically, Blum-Kulka (1987 cited in Marti, 2006, p. 1839) reports the most polite strategies in English are perceived to be conventionally indirect ones. Therefore, by greater use of conventionally indirect strategies, the higher proficient L2 learners show greater sensitivity to the use of politeness strategies in requesting. Overusing conventionally indirect types of requesting by high level L2 learners may have to do with the fact that high levels of grammatical competence do not ensure high levels of pragmatic competence. However, the majority of studies which have looked at the relationship between grammatical and pragmatic competence show that proficient L2 learners seem to be better at using speech act strategies (Trosborg, 1995) and comprehending illocutionary force (Koike, 1989). In short, the literature presents two generally accepted claims about the relationship between grammatical and pragmatic competence: (1) grammar is not a sufficient condition for pragmatic competence; however, (2) grammar is a necessary condition for pragmatic competence (Koike, 1989; Levinson, 1983).

The first claim is based on the observation that an L2 learner already knows linguistic structures, but has not yet learnt to use them as some pragmatic strategies (Bardovi-Harlig & Dörnyei, 1998). The second claim is based on the observation that an L2 learner knows the appropriate pragmatic strategy for a given context, but does not know how to realize it due to limited linguistic knowledge (Takahashi & Beebe, 1993). This fact might be a possible reason behind the overusing of direct strategies by the low EFL learners in the present study.

As a matter of fact, the higher frequency of direct strategies among the lower proficiency L2 learners is probably a developmental stage where simpler and also more direct expressions are being used. The low proficiency L2 learners use direct type of requesting because of lack of lexical and syntactic knowledge to produce an indirect request strategy which requires more complex structures.

This tendency among the low group results from L1 transfer since direct request is the common form of request speech act in the Persian language (Eslamirasekh, 1993). So, it is reasonable to claim that this strategy is used by the low L2 learners automatically in English; since the two other request types used by native speakers of English are more grammatically complex, they may not be automatized in the L2 learners' interlanguage. The low L2 learners, then, seek to mitigate or avoid face-threatening behavior in ways they know best. In this regard, Olshtain and Cohen (1991) mention that "second language learners' attempts to translate conventional routines specific to first language verbatim into the second language often result in miscommunication even if the results of their attempts are grammatically correct" (p. 155). A negative correlation is found between the likelihood of transfer and the level of proficiency. Advanced L2 learners excel lower L2 learners at identifying contexts where L1 speech act strategies could or could not be used.

It is important to note that in the present study non-conventionally indirect strategies are the least made request types in all groups. The underuse of this strategy by native speakers might be due to the fact that native speakers of English conceive of this type of requesting as being less polite than conventionally indirect strategy (Blum-Kulka 1987 cited in Brown & Levinson, 1987). In line with this view, Weizman (1993) affirms that non-conventionally indirect request requires the hearer to deduce the speaker's intention, which can be a burden to the hearer. The highly inferential nature of this strategy may be the major cause for their being regarded as less polite than conventionally indirect strategies (p. 125).

L2 learners, specially the low proficiency group, are probably not sufficiently competent to use this type of requesting that is considered the most complex and indirect strategy. It is also important to mention that non-conventionally indirect requests require the addressee to compute the illocution from the interaction of the locution with its context (Ruzickova, 2007, p. 1177). Accordingly, it is believed by many SLA researchers that L2 learners acquire the use of utterances with opaque illocutionary meanings later in their pragmatic acquisition. High indirect pragmatic strategies like hinting require high processing cost and, therefore, such strategies may be more difficult to acquire (Bouton, 1994; Kasper & Schmidt, 1996).

The findings of this study, on the other hand, contradict that of Weizman (1993) and Trosborg (1995) in which L2 learners used non-conventionally indirect strategies more than native speakers. Weizman (1993) suggests that *Hints* have a highly "deniability potential." Accordingly, the overuse of *Hints* by L2 learners may result from their exploitation of the inferential nature of *Hints* in order to save their own face (p. 95).

Trosborg (1995) suggests that L2 learners get no further than making a preliminary to a request because they are doubtful about how to phrase the actual request. The addressee, however, interprets the preliminary move as *Hints*, eliminating the need for the L2 learner to make real request at all.

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TABLE 4.
FREQUENCY AND PERCENTAGE OF REQUEST STRATEGIES BY ALL GROUPS

Strategy	Low F (%)	Mid F (%)	High F (%)	Negative F (%)
Mood Derivable	181 (34.60)	238 (24.48)	119 (18.91)	48 (21.23)
Performative	0 (0)	7 (0.72)	7 (1.11)	0 (0)
Hedge	18 (3.44)	44 (4.52)	34 (5.40)	5 (2.21)
Obligation	2 (0.38)	12 (1.23)	1 (0.15)	7 (3.09)
Want Statement	16 (3.05)	47 (4.83)	41 (6.51)	19 (8.40)
Suggestory	1 (0.19)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Preparatory	290 (55.44)	570 (58.64)	396 (62.95)	126 (55.75)
Strong hints	15 (2.86)	52 (5.34)	28 (4.45)	21 (9.29)
Mild hints	0 (0)	2 (0.20)	3 (0.47)	0 (0)
Total	523	972	629	226

TABLE 5.
CHI- SQUARE VALUE OF REQUESTS BY ALL GROUPS

	Value	df	Sig.
Chi-Square	125.40	27	0.000

$p < 0.05$ Critical Value = 40.11

As for the second part of the question–difference in the type and frequency of the request strategies made by Iranian EFL students and the native speakers of English based on social constrains of power and distance–the analysis of the distribution of the request strategy types in six combinations of situations is discussed here in the following parts:

C. Combination A

The analysis of the request strategies used by the native and the nonnative speakers reveals that in combination A (= P + D), the use of conventionally indirect strategies plays a significant role as the most favored for both the native speakers and the EFL learners (see Table 6 for the frequency of strategy types and Table 7 showing the difference). According to Blum-Kulka et al. (1989 cited in Chen, 2007, p. 46), the level of directness of a request has strong correlation with the expectation of right and obligations between hearers and speakers. The greater the right of the speaker to ask and the greater the obligation of the hearer to comply with the request, the less motivation for the use of indirectness. Relative dominance also affects the level of indirectness. That is, the greater the speaker's dominance (power) to the addressee, the lower the use of indirectness is expected. Additionally, as argued by Rue, Zhang, and Shin (2007), when the interlocutors do not know each other, there is a strong trend of employing conventionally indirect strategy type of requesting.

The EFL learners displayed developmental patterns in using indirectness in these situations. In other words, a decline in direct request is observed with increasing proficiency. The main reason might be their sufficient pragmatic competence in relation to the effect of social power on choosing the contextually proper type of requesting. However, the higher proficiency EFL learners in this study are more indirect than the native speakers. Similarly, in the previous ILP studies (Byon, 2004), the advanced L2 learners appear to develop a greater sensitivity to the use of politeness strategies in requesting than native speakers. That is, EFL learners sometimes experience communication breakdown due to overgeneralizing stereotypes of an l2 culture. In this case, they tend to overuse conventionally indirect strategy which is considered as the most polite type of requesting.

TABLE 6.
FREQUENCY AND PERCENTAGE OF STRATEGIES BY ALL GROUPS IN COMBINATION A

Strategy	Low F (%)	Mid F (%)	High F (%)	Negative F (%)
Mood Derivable	23 (24.21)	26 (15.66)	6 (5.45)	7 (17.50)
Performative	0 (0)	2 (1.20)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Hedge	6 (6.31)	8 (4.81)	3 (2.72)	0 (0)
Obligation	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Want Statement	0 (0)	0 (0)	2 (1.81)	0 (0)
Suggestory	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Preparatory	63 (66.31)	119 (71.68)	92 (83.63)	31 (77.50)
Strong hints	3 (3.15)	11 (6.62)	7 (6.36)	2 (5.00)
Mild hints	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Total	95	166	110	40

TABLE 7.
CHI- SQUARE VALUE OF COMBINATION A

	Value	df	Sig.
Chi-Square	31.16	18	0.02

$p < 0.05$ Critical Value = 28.86

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D. Combination B

Considering the correlation between the level of indirectness of requesting and expectations of rights and obligations between the interlocutors, the native speakers showed less motivation for the use of indirectness. Since there is equal social status between the speaker and the hearer (e.g., friends), the requester is not endowed with a contracted right to make his/her request, just as the requestee who is by no means obligated to comply with it. Therefore, the request may be performed without abundance of politeness. As compared with addressing the familiar equal person, the native speakers seemed to be more direct by employing direct substrategies as the second preferred type of requesting (see Table 8 for the frequency of strategy types and Table 9 showing the difference).

On the contrary, the EFL learners mainly relied on the conventional indirectness which implies the fact that they do not acquire the sociopragmatic knowledge necessary to perform appropriate request type which is contextually proper under the varying social distance. In other words, by keeping the same trend of indirectness in two combinations, the EFL learners are not sensitive enough to the effect of social distance to utilize more variation in the types of request strategy.

It is likely that Iranian EFL learners are not taught how to perform appropriate speech act under varying situational features. So, they may produce grammatically correct utterances, but inauthentic performance in terms of real language use.

TABLE 8.
FREQUENCY AND PERCENTAGE OF STRATEGIES BY ALL GROUPS IN COMBINATION B

Strategy	**Low F (%)**	**Mid F (%)**	**High F (%)**	**Negative F (%)**
Mood Derivable	18 (19.56)	28 (16.76)	11 (10.28)	9 (23.07)
Performative	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Hedge	2 (2.17)	6 (3.59)	6 (5.60)	0 (0)
Obligation	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Want Statement	2 (2.17)	4 (2.39)	4 (3.73)	4 (10.25)
Suggestory	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Preparatory	67 (72.82)	118 (70.65)	79 (73.83)	19 (48.71)
Strong hints	3 (3.26)	11 (6.58)	7 (6.54)	7 (17.94)
Mild hints	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Total	92	167	107	39

TABLE 9.
CHI- SQUARE VALUE OF COMBINATION B

	Value	**df**	**Sig.**
Chi-Square	29.60	15	0.01

$p < 0.05$ Critical Value = 24.99

E. Combination C

In addressing unfamiliar people in the lower position, nonnative speakers are more direct than native speakers. While the native speakers used both direct and indirect strategies as the preferred type of requesting, the EFL learners chose direct request as the preferred strategy. Among them, the low level L2 learners show strong tendency towards the use of the most direct type of requesting–*Imperative*.

In general, both the native speakers and the EFL learners were more direct in comparison with the previous situations in which they were requesting someone with equal power. In situations of this type, the requester (e.g., customer, teacher) has authority over the requestee (e.g., waiter, student). The greater the right of the speaker to ask and the greater the obligation of the hearer to comply with the request, the greater the likelihood of licensing direct request. Regarding the social distance between the interlocutors, the speaker and the hearer do not know each other, and so there is a strong trend of employing conventionally indirect strategy type.

Obviously, the native speakers showed sensitivity to both social power and social distance by utilizing more variation in the types of requesting. Therefore, they used both direct and indirect strategies. The overuse of direct request might display L2 learners' sensitivity to social power, but their unawareness of the effect of social distance.

The overuse of *Imperative* by the low EFL learners might suggest their insufficient pragmatic competence which makes them unable to use the necessary pragmalinguistic means to express an appropriate request. Moreover, the fact that the higher EFL learners displayed closer performance to the native speakers in terms of indirectness demonstrates a developmental pattern in their interlanguage request. This finding supports grammatical competence as a necessary condition for pragmatic competence (Bardovi-Harlig, 1999).

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TABLE 10.
FREQUENCY AND PERCENTAGE OF STRATEGIES BY ALL GROUPS IN COMBINATION C

Strategy	Low F (%)	Mid F (%)	High F (%)	Negative F (%)
Mood Derivable	68 (74.72)	82 (49.69)	56 (51.85)	14 (36.84)
Performative	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Hedge	0 (0)	3 (1.81)	3 (2.77)	0 (0)
Obligation	1 (1.09)	5 (3.03)	1 (0.92)	3 (7.89)
Want Statement	3 (3.29)	3 (1.81)	5 (4.62)	1 (2.63)
Suggestory	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Preparatory	15 (16.48)	63 (38.18)	38 (35.18)	17 (44.73)
Strong hints	4 (4.39)	8 (4.84)	4 (3.70)	3 (7.89)
Mild hints	0 (0)	1 (0.60)	1 (0.92)	0 (0)
Total	91	165	108	38

TABLE 11.
CHI- SQUARE VALUE OF COMBINATION C

	Value	df	Sig.
Chi-Square	37.41	21	0.01

$p < 0.05$ Critical Value = 32.67

F. Combination D

In the realization of requests with familiar juniors in combination D, the native speakers employed various direct strategies. They applied indirect strategy as the second preferred type of requesting. Unlike the previous combinations, the native speakers chose various types of direct substrategies, such as *Imperative*, *Want statement*, and *Hedged performative*, attesting to the fact that the speaker's (e.g., professor's) social status is higher than the addressee's (e.g., student's), and therefore, s/he has the right to make a request, and the hearer has the obligation to obey. Accordingly, face-saving strategies are not required, and the choice of strategy tends to move toward directness. Like the native speakers, the higher proficient EFL learners showed productive and varied forms of direct substrategies, whereas the low proficient group still focused on the most direct substrategy–*Imperative*. This implies that the higher EFL learners show sensitivity to the change of social distance, and in this regard, they have developed sufficient pragmatic competence to display target-like behavior. Accordingly, they realized different forms of direct request, such as *Want statement*, *Hedged performative*, and *Imperative* (see Table 12 for the frequency of strategy types and Table 13 showing the difference):

TABLE 12.
FREQUENCY AND PERCENTAGE OF STRATEGIES BY ALL GROUPS IN COMBINATION D

Strategy	Low F (%)	Mid F (%)	High F (%)	Negative F (%)
Mood Derivable	44 (53.01)	62 (37.80)	39 (36.44)	11 (29.72)
Performative	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Hedge	3 (3.61)	4 (2.43)	5 (4.67)	3 (8.10)
Obligation	1 (1.20)	4 (2.43)	0 (0)	2 (5.40)
Want Statement	1 (1.20)	17 (10.36)	12 (11.21)	5 (13.51)
Suggestory	1 (1.20)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Preparatory	31 (37.37)	62 (37.80)	41 (38.31)	15 (40.54)
Strong hints	2 (2.40)	14 (8.53)	9 (8.41)	1 (2.70)
Mild hints	0 (0)	1 (0.60)	1 (0.93)	0 (0)
Total	83	164	107	37

TABLE 13.
CHI- SQUARE VALUE OF COMBINATION D

	Value	df	Sig.
Chi-Square	44.39	24	0.007

$p < 0.05$ Critical Value = 36.41

G. Combination E

In this particular combination, the native speakers were prone to use *Preparatory* as the most appropriate way to realize requests in the situations in which the addressee had a higher power rank, and there was little familiarity between the interlocutors. The next preferred formula of head acts for the native speakers was *Strong hints*. In other words, they almost exclusively relied on indirectness.

According to the notion of dominance and obligation mentioned earlier, the speaker (e.g., student) has little right to ask the hearer (e.g., professor)**,** and also the hearer has no obligation to comply with the request. On the other hand, since the interlocutors' social distance is greater, the greater use of indirectness is expected.

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The EFL learners did not display the native-like performance. They tended to choose various direct substrategies as the second preferred type of requesting. Thus, they were much more direct than the native counterparts. This might be the reflection of a lack of well-developed pragmatic competence in addressing someone in a higher status. In other words, in spite of having a good command of grammatical competence, the EFL learners showed little evidence of situational variation (see Table 14 for the frequency of strategy types and Table 15 showing the difference).

As most Iranian L2 learners overgeneralize the use of direct requests, it appears that Iranian L2 learners rely on their L1 sociopragmatic knowledge while speaking to unfamiliar superiors. In Eslamirasekh's (1993) study, Persian speakers used significantly more direct strategies in all situations compared to English speakers. That is, the two cultures disagree on the specific directness level appropriate for a given situation (p. 96).

However, the use of indirectness by the speakers of one language does not imply that they are more polite than the speakers of another language. According to Brown and Levinson's (1987) notion of positive politeness, "although the FTAs are performed with redressive action when adopting positive politeness, indirectness is not included among these strategies" (p. 130). So, Eslamirasekh (1993) concludes that the overuse of direct strategies does not imply that Persian speakers are less polite than English speakers because they use direct strategies by the use of mitigating elements (e.g., excuse me, dear friend, etc.) (p. 97).

TABLE 14.
FREQUENCY AND PERCENTAGE OF STRATEGIES BY ALL GROUPS IN COMBINATION E

Strategy	**Low F (%)**	**Mid F (%)**	**High F (%)**	**Negative F (%)**
Mood Derivable	10 (12.82)	25 (17.12)	3 (3.26)	3 (9.00)
Performative	0 (0)	2 (1.36)	4 (4.34)	0 (0)
Hedge	4 (5.12)	10 (6.84)	13 (14.13)	0 (0)
Obligation	0 (0)	2 (1.36)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Want Statement	5 (6.41)	4 (2.73)	8 (8.69)	1 (3.03)
Suggestory	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Preparatory	57 (73.07)	97 (66.43)	62 (67.39)	24 (72.72)
Strong hints	2 (2.56)	6 (4.10)	1 (1.08)	5 (15.15)
Mild hints	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (1.08)	0 (0)
Total	78	146	92	33

TABLE 15.
CHI- SQUARE VALUE OF COMBINATION E

	Value	**df**	**Sig.**
Chi-Square	48.56	24	0.002

$p < 0.05$ Critical Value = 36.41

H. Combination F

The native speakers placed more variance in the choice of request strategies when the requests were made toward the addressees who were familiar superiors. They used both direct and conventionally indirect strategies as the preferred types of requesting. That is, by change of social distance between interlocutors, native speakers change their level of directness.

Although the speaker (e.g., customer) has lower social dominance than the hearer (e.g., manager) and, therefore, there is motivation toward indirectness, the interlocutors know each other, and there is a strong trend of using direct type of requesting. The EFL learners, however, did not utilize their requests in native-like ways. They showed a decline in the proportion of *Imperative* and a shift to conventional indirectness. Since L2 learners are not sensitive enough to the effect of social distance, they do not display significant change in their choice of request strategies in addressing unfamiliar or familiar superiors. In other words, an anticipated trend toward greater directness does not take place with an increase in familiarity by L2 learners, especially with higher proficiency.

The EFL learners did not notice social distance, so they produced more indirect strategies in English, traditionally described to them as being more polite in its request form. That is, it seems that EFL learners overgeneralize stereotypes of an L2 culture by focusing on conventionally indirect strategies. The fact that the low proficient EFL learners in these situations have used more direct requests may not be considered as emanating from their well-developed pragmatic knowledge, but the influence of their L1 competence since the pragmatic trend of overusing directness by the low group has been observed in almost all situations (see Table 16 for the frequency of strategy types and Table17 showing the difference):

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TABLE 16.
FREQUENCY AND PERCENTAGE OF STRATEGIES BY ALL GROUPS IN COMBINATION F

Strategy	Low F (%)	Mid F (%)	High F (%)	Negative F (%)
Mood Derivable	18 (21.42)	16 (9.75)	4 (3.80)	4 (10.64)
Performative	0 (0)	3 (1.82)	3 (2.85)	0 (0)
Hedge	3 (3.57)	13 (7.92)	4 (3.80)	2 (5.12)
Obligation	0 (0)	1 (0.60)	0 (0)	2 (5.12)
Want Statement	5 (5.95)	19 (11.58)	10 (9.52)	8 (20.51)
Suggestory	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Preparatory	57 (67.85)	112 (68.29)	84 (80.00)	20 (51.28)
Strong hints	1 (1.19)	0 (0)	0 (0)	3 (7.69)
Mild hints	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Total	84	164	105	39

TABLE 17.
CHI- SQUARE VALUE OF COMBINATION F

	Value	df	Sig.
Chi-Square	74.77	24	0.002

$p < 0.05$ Critical Value = 32.67

As an ILP research to investigate the sociopragmatic features of Iranian EFL learners, this experiment contributes to the field of interlanguage pragmatics. By enhancing our understandings of the interlanguage features of EFL learners in English speech act of request, it is hoped that this study will illustrate the significance of interlanguage pragmatic studies among EFL educators and researchers and stimulate their research interest in this fast growing discipline.

This type of study not only is useful in supplying L2 teachers and materials developers with native speakers' baseline data, but also indicates how and in what situations certain groups deviate from native speaker norms. It should, therefore, be a major goal to teach relevant general cultural schemata and to make nonnative learners aware of differences between their own cultural schemata and those of native speakers.

In line with the results of other studies (Alcon, 2005; Bardovi-Harlig & Taylor, 2003; Kasper & Rose, 1999), one of the major findings of the present research is that if L2 teachers in foreign language classrooms provide L2 learners with relevant input, they can develop appropriate request behaviors similar to those of native speakers. However, the present study merely investigated the directness level of speech act of request and did not look at the length of the requests produced, the use of politeness markers, or external and internal modifications of the request. Therefore, further studies are needed to unveil and explore these issues.

IV. Conclusion

This study was designed to address the important issue of pragmatic development of request strategies in Iranian EFL learners in order to determine whether and to what extent interlanguage realization of the speech act of requesting by Iranian learners differs from request realization by native speakers in English.

The conventionally indirect strategy might be a universal method of making request toward the addressees (Ellis, 1994; Trosborg, 1995). The present study suggests a positive correlation between the use of indirect type of requesting and the EFL learners' proficiency level, that is, Iranian EFL learners display developmental patterns of request strategies.

It was observed that the high proficient EFL learners overused the conventional indirect strategy type. So, in line with the findings of other interlanguage studies (Byon, 2004; Rue, et al., 2007), in the present experiment, the higher EFL learners appeared to develop a greater sensitivity to the use of more polite strategies in requesting than what was seen in the native speakers. This study also supports Ellis's (1994) view that even advanced L2 learners do not acquire fully native-like ways of requesting.

In terms of the influence of the social variables, the findings of this research reveal that, as far as social dominance is concerned, the EFL learners displayed closer performance to the native speakers. But in terms of social distance, many differences were observed between the types of request strategy made by the native speakers and Iranian EFL learners. It seems that the EFL learners had not acquired sufficient sociopragmatic knowledge to be able to display the proper social behavior. That is, they were not sensitive to both social power and social distance.

L2 learners may have access to the same range of speech acts and realizations as do native speakers, but they differ from native speakers in the strategies they choose. More importantly, L2 learners must be aware of an L2 sociocultural constraint on speech acts in order to be pragmatically competent. Following Rose and Kasper (2001), the claim advanced here is that although highly context-sensitive in selecting pragmatic strategies in their own language, L2 learners may underdifferentiate such context variables as social distance and social power in an L2.

It is important to note that, as predicted by *politeness theory* (Brown & Levinson, 1987), power relationship, social and psychological distance, and degree of imposition constrain communicative action universally, but L2 learners' assessment of the weight and values of these universal context factors varies substantively from context to context as well as across speech communities. There is, thus, a strong indication that instructional intervention may be facilitative to, or even necessary for, the acquisition of L2 pragmatic ability.

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Finally, it is hoped that research in L2 pragmatics will not only improve our understanding of pragmatic development in speech act realization and of the nature of strategies, but will also enable SLA researchers to incorporate effective methods of teaching pragmatics in EFL classrooms.

APPENDIX A DISCOURSE COMPETITION TEST (DCT)

NAME: …….. MAJOR: ……. NATIONALITY: …….

Directions: ***Please read the following descriptions of situations and write what you would say in each situation.***

1- You are trying to study in your room and hear loud music coming from another student's room down the hall. You don't know the student, but you decide to ask him/her to turn the music down. What would you say?

2- You are at a record store with your best friend. There's a CD you really want to buy, but you don't have any money. How do you ask your friend to lend you money?

3- You are studying at home. Your younger brother opens the window and the cold wind blows right into your face and bothers you. You want to ask him to close it. What would you say?

4- You have bought a shirt from a big store for your father, but he doesn't like its color. You decide to go to the clothes store and ask the manager of the store to allow you to exchange the shirt. What would you say?

5- Your friend and you go to a restaurant to eat. You want to order and need to ask the waiter for the menu. What would you say?

6- You are writing your thesis and need to interview the president of a university whom you don't know. You know the president is very busy, but still want to ask her/him to spare one or two hours for your interview. What would you say?

7- For registration you need to fill out a couple of forms. You search all of your pockets and can not find a pen. You want to ask another student who is sitting next to you in the department hall. What would you say?

8- You were absent last Friday history class that you are enrolled in. So, you decide to borrow your friend's notes to catch up with the rest of the class. What would you say to get this friend to lend you the notes?

9- You are a professor teaching a course in psychology. You want one of the students who is very competent and always contributes class discussion, to present a paper in a class a week earlier than scheduled. However, midterm exams are next week and she has a heavy course load. What would you say?

10- You really have to take this course in order to graduate, but you found that the course is already closed. So, you decide to ask the professor, whom you don't know, to allow you to take this course. What would you say to get this professor to permit you to participate in this course?

11- You have a paper due in one of your classes next week. However, you will be very busy this week and don't have any time to write it. You go to your professor's office to ask for more time to write the paper. How do you request an extension?

12- You are a librarian. Today, a student is making a noise and disturbing other students. You don't know that student. However, you decide to ask the student to quiet down. What would you say?

13- A friend of yours from out of the town is paying you a visit. Both of you would like to take a photo together to remember this happy moment. You decide to ask a nearby person who is stranger to you, to do this favor. What would you say?

14- You and your friend are members of the college skiing club. You have just arrived at the mountain and see that your friend is applying sunscreen lotion. You want to use that lotion because you have forgotten to bring your own. How would you ask your friend?

15- Your English midterm exam is approaching, and you find that the date of the test is the same as that of your brother's wedding. You decide to ask the professor whom you don't know personally to rearrange another day especially for you to take this test. What would you say?

16- Your mother will be visiting from out of town and you want to pick her up at the airport. However, her flight arrives at 3:00 PM, but you have to work until 5:00 p.m. How do you ask your boss to let you out of work early?

17- You are a teacher. It's the beginning of the semester and you don't know the students yet. In class, the mobile phone of one of your students rings. You want to ask her/him to turn off the mobile phone. What would you say?

18- You are going to visit your friend, who lives in the college dormitory. You are on the campus, but you don't know where the room is? You are going to ask a student for the location of the dorm. How would you ask the student?

19- It's 7:00 a.m. and you want to go to work. You have to leave your daughter alone because her baby sitter is late. You decide to ask your friend, who lives in your neighborhood to take care of your little daughter in the meanwhile. What would you say?

20- You are the manager of a company. You are in a meeting with the other members of your company. You need to write some notes, but you realize that you don't have any paper. You turn to the person sitting next to you and you know her/him very well. What would you say?

21- Your class has just finished and you need a ride home. Your fellow classmate who was supposed to give you a ride is absent. As you come out of the class, you see an assistant professor. You decide to ask him/her to give a lift to you. What would you say?

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22- You are the president of a university. Something is wrong with your computer. You have to finish some work which is due tomorrow. One of the students is very skillful in fixing computers. You don't know him/her. However, you want to ask him/her to fix your computer. What would you say?

23- You are applying for a scholarship, and you decide to ask a professor, who knows you very well as your academic advisor, to write a recommendation letter for you. What would you say to ask her/him to do this favor for you?

24- You are the owner of a big bookstore. It is the beginning of the semester, and you are very busy. Today you want to extend business hours by an hour. So, you decide to ask your clerk whom you know quite well, to stay after store hours. What would you say?

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Self and Other—An Analysis of Jesse in *Wonderland*

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***Abstract*—This article aims to analyse the protagonist Jesse's characteristics from the perspective of struggle between Self and Other, and further to explore Oates's great concern over the fate of human beings. In *Wonderland*, Oates voices Jesse's suffering by the combination of individual experience and social events, and provides a solution to enjoy a better life—love.**

***Index Terms*—*Wonderland*, self, other, subject and servant, love**

I. Introduction

Joyce Carol Oates (1938—), one of the prominent writer in contemporary world literature, is not only a novelist, poet, playwright, but also a critic, editor, and writer-in-residence at Princeton University. Oates impresses people with her productivity and versatility, and is known as "Lady Faulkner" for the variety of her literature fields, unusual depth and unique techniques. Oates once confessed that she has "a laughably Balzacian ambition to get the whole world into a book" (Clemons, 1969, p.5), and she has really created many novels with such kind of great ambition. *Wonderland* is such a good example.

Among Joyce Carol Oates's works, *Wonderland* has a special position. It is one of the representative works at her early phase in the 1960s, also it marks the transitional period of Oates's writing. Just like Oates says that "with *Wonderland* I came to the end of a phase of my life, though I didn't know it", "I want to move toward a more articulate moral position, not just dramatizing nightmarish problems but trying to show possible ways of transcending them" (Clemons, 1972, p.39). After *Wonderland*, Oates's creative writing began to shift to modern or post-modern techniques, exploration of charaters' inner world rather than mere description of social events.

Wonderland made its first appearance in 1971, two years later Oates revised the end of the story. This article discusses the second version in 1973. Although most critics have noticed Oates's obsession with the dark side of human's personality, but as to the question of what factors contribute to Jesse's character, it still invites further explorations. The aim of this article is to illustrate how Jesse create self-construction and realize self-improvement, based on the relation between Self and Other. In particular, the emphasis will be on why this kind of relation is formed at certain period. This article has provided the phantasmagoria of personality, which is well worth contemporary people's attention.

II. Self-construction under the Influence of Other

According to Lacan's theory of Mirror Stage, Other is indispensable for the long and tiring process of self-construction. Self is not a natural being, rather it's formed and derived from our interaction with other people. For a man, father as the Other plays a decisive role in one's character. There are four men played the role of vital Other in Jesse's different life stages, respectively they are grandfather Vogel, adoptive father Dr. Pedersen, father-in-law Cady, and famous doctor Perrault.

Childhood is the most important environment of human growth and directly decides the formation of Self. Just like Diane Tolomeo (1981) claims that "Characters are never given to us out of context, out of their families and the environment in which their growth occurred"(p.6). In *Wonderland*, the story begins with the death of whole family except Jesse, fourteen years old boy, who succeded in eluding the gun-toting father. Since then Jesse as an orphan starts struggling to be a man of wholeness in the "wonderland" of America involved in the Great Depressions. Unfortunately, after the accident, Jesse can't grow up like a normal boy any more, without family nor any relatives except grandfather Vogel. Then Vogel takes the role of vital Other, making great influences upon Jesse.

Due to the negative and pessimistic quality of Other, Self must get into some bad habits from Other grandfather Vogel. In addition young Jesse is so fragile and weak, who failed to judge right from wrong and make right choices. Thus during this period, Self has no power to fight with Other, then the fact is clear that Self is very likely to imitate Other in every way. Obviously in the company of grandfather, Jesse becomes indifferent, silent, low-spirited, rather than an active, optimistic and ambitious boy. Jeoffrey Steven Bull (1997) says in his dissertation that as a nihilist ego, Jesse "instead of seeking accommodation with his past and his present life, he looks for relief in the nihilism of the isolated sovereignty" (p.99). Jesse prefers to be alone, even "terrified of people, strangers, coming loose in front of him" (Oates,

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1973, p.57). In short, just like his favorite horse, Jesse is a brainless slumber, nearly lost the ability of thinking. Until the broken sense of Self awake, he can't accept the fact that his grandfather denies the furnitures which is the symbol of his past, and even denies his personality. Then Jesse left grandfather to seek his life in another direction.

In the boyhood, adoptive father Dr. Pedersen is a more influential figure. According to Fromm (1956), "fatherly love is conditional love. Its principle is I love you, because you do your duty, because you are like me"(p.43). Pedersen's love for Jesse just bases on his absolute obedience, otherwise the punishment withdrawal of fatherly love will be waiting for Jesse. Pedersen characterises with its belief of Super Man and dictatorship. What's worse, Jesse eagerly craves for family and love, exactly speaking it's instruction and protection that Jesse longs for most. According to Karen Horney (1945), Jesse belongs to the compliant type of people. "This type need to be liked, wanted, desired, loved; to feel accepted, welcomed, approved of, appreciated; to be needed, to be of importance to others, especially to one particular person; to be helped, protected, taken care of, guided" (Horney, 1945, p.51). Therefore Jesse tries every means to please Dr. Pedersen and does everything being ordered, even imitating his action and appearance. It's clear that in this period Jesse has no ability to disobey at all, because of the sharp contrast between weak Self and violent, powerful Other. What's more, Jesse is unaware of the fact that his seemingly happy and satisfactory life is in the sacrifice of selfhood. Jesse holds no will to rebel and pursue Self. As a result, there is no struggle between Self and Other at all, Jesse is willing to follow Pedersen's words, surrendering himself to the strong Other's magic power.

Above all, Jesse is under the control of Others completely, no subjectivity or personality. Due to the unmatched contrast of strength between Self and Other, the former has no other ways but being the tool of the latter, being used and dominated. The result is that Self shares more similarities with Other, such as selfish, autocratic, ignorance of the past and personality. Luckily there is still a poor sense of self, and his sympathy for Mrs. Pedersen saved himself, although failed to rescue his adoptive mother. Obviously it's the only way for Jesse to save himself, otherwise he can only be a shadow of Other Pedersen, the copy one, thoughtless. At last depending on the power of his own deep heart, the condition that Other's absolute rule over Self is over.

Youth Jesse, stronger and stronger, turns to the position of making an active choice of Others and making use of it. Of course, normal, reasonable relation between Self and Other should be equal and multiple. One can't be controlled by the only Other, either can't avoid the community, and what kind of relation will depends upon the forces between them. As time goes on, Jesse is no longer as weak as before, however he still fails to deal with the relation with Others in a right way. In a word, in youth Jesse has the ability to choose proper Other that he needs and actively tries his best to make achievement in order to get through the hard life.

On one hand, Jesse's sadness and confusion lies in the abnormal growth at his childhood caused by the dominant figures Willard Harte, Vogel and Pedersen. Due to their negative, absurd qualities, Jesse is molded into an abnormal person, a person doomed to lose himself and to be unhappy. On the other, it's worthy to notice that in the year 1945 Jesse changed his name to Jesse Vogel, which suggests he is planning to live a new life. Jesse naively believes that he would begin a normal and peaceful life: "he would begin an internship in Chicago in July; he would marry Anne-Marie; he would establish a certain life, professional and private. Wasn't this enough to pit against the universe?" (Oates, 1973, p.192). However Jesse's simple hope can't be realized due to the eventful society at that time.

In *Wonderland*, Oates merges personal fate with quite a disturbing society. This period, as Oates calls it "the finite passing of an infinite passion", is the time when "a life seems to come apart, to be violently slashed apart, then it comes together again and ordinary life resumes" (Oates, 1973, p.187). Wang Hairu (1996) has argued that after the Second World War, American entered into the Cold War stage, although there are fast development in economy and technology, people is still enveloped by the horrible and dangerous society. Thus Jesse's suffering is not because he personally failed to live through hard life, just as Oates (1973) says in *Wonderland*: "this confused sorrow that populated the universe that constructed the universe. It was not local. It was not even contained in the vast wastes of the war or in the jumble of history in this century. Time was mobbed with people. How could he establish himself, construct himself, in such a mob?" (p.195). In short, it's the fact that social turbulence results in individual confusion.

In terms of Jesse, the way he found to survive in such a society is science, represented by Dr. Cady. Dr. Cady is a believer and practitioner of mechanism; it is his way to survive in the turbulent society. He states that "human beings fear mechanisms because they do not understand that they are mechanisms themselves. Perfect machines" (Oates, 1973, p.191).The drive for the choice is that Jesse attempts to shy away from the humble past and precarious society. He is crazy about the thoughtless feeling while doing the job, which makes it possible to think nothing, being an empty container. He mistakes it as a valuable chance to forget the memory of his past and hard life. Realising that Cady is just the person, Jesse endeavours to approach him, especially by the marriage with Cady's daughter Hellen. It's noticeable that Jesse has gained great improvement, he is already capable to seek what he needs and wants, trying to satisfy himself. Therefore in youth Jesse's relationship with Other is different from that in the boyhood. During this period Self becomes the owner of himself rather than an attachment to Other, and Self makes Other serve for him.

It indicates that the relation between Self and Other is in dynamic, which is changeable with the development of Self and Other. When Self is above Other, the latter will be controlled to a certain extent, so is the verse. Take the fourth vital Other Dr. Perrault for example, he is also the Other chosen by Jesse. As both marriage life and career become worse and worse, Jesse lives in great embarrassment. Then Jesse is attracted by Perrault, a famous surgeon doctor, under his instruction, Jesse feels relaxed and his body can work itself regularly out of his control. Again Jesse becomes fantacy

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with this feeling, and regards it as the ideal way to relieve himself. Unfortunately Jesse lost the ability to absorb the good and disdain the bad, the fact is that he takes absolute acception of other. As a result, Jesse being another Perrault, has so much in common with him, and it is reasonable to say that Jesse is the copy one. Jesse felt that he is weighed down with age when together with Perrault. It proves that Jesse is unaware about how to deal with Other in a suitable way. In fact he is still controlled by Other, although Jesse makes a choice of him actively.

Just like Ordon O. Taylor (1974) suggests in the essay that "for everyone in *Wonderland* the present is a pressure gauge of an accumulating past; for each of them 'the past is always there, in your head'"(p.24). That means the past and reality can't be avoided, or be separated from people's life, they will exist forever. Thus the things that Jesse needs most are encouragement, bravery, honesty and real friends, rather than Willard Harte's violence, Vogel's solipsist, Cady's mechanism, nor Perrault's denial of personality. Unluckily Jesse doesn't realize it, he continually struggles sadly in almost half of his life.

To conclude, building selfhood can't separate from Other, and their relation is always in dynamic, either the self being dominated by the other or the reverse. In fact the ideal relation is that both sides keep balance of each other, being equal. After the struggle between Self and Other, Self acquired the sense of selfhood with the help of Other, and Other continues to play different kinds of roles after the basic formation of Self.

III. Self-image as Mirror of Other

Lacan gets important implication from Hegel's dialectics about subject and servant, from which he concludes that Other as the equal opposite part, takes the role of mirror to reflect the image of Self, which provides another aspect for Self to examine oneself. In *Wonderland*, Jesse assumes the center of consciousness in most part of the novel, however Jesse is not always aware of his behavior and thoughts, who always feels confusing, hurried and nervous. So the speech he made is not persuasive, not reliable if used to make speculations about his personality. Thus Oates provides many Others in the novel, it's helpful to get a clear understanding of Jesse. In detail, they are his friend Trick, lovers Anne Mary and Reva Denk. On the basis of different relation between them and Jesse, it demonstrates various facets of Jesse.

Trick Monk is an admiring assistant of Dr. Cady at first, then a poet, finally a counterculture poet-guru to the young. In nature he turns out to be every bit as horrible as Pedersen. He would like to be a great gynecologist, to "take loving, gentle smears" to examine in the solitude of a laboratory (Oates, 1973, p.228). Just as Pedersen dreams of invading the minds of others, Trick wants to impregnate women with speeches. In addition, the poems written by him not only demonstrate his own mind, but also expose Jesse's confusing inner world. In Gavin Cologne-Brooks's(2005) words, "Trick is both otherworldly and a kind of mirror image of the main protagonist" (p.51).

Oates arranges Trick to mirror Jesse's personality and life journey, for they live in the similar personal life and share the same social life, which shows Oates's concern over human destiny. Trick, being an assistant of Dr. Cady as well as Jesse, is explicitly conscious of Jesse's confusion: no faith in life, in the past and defiance of Others. However after recognition of such confusion that exists in every one's life, Trick makes a decision to give up the job in school and attempts to save himself from poor mental world and cruel reality by writing poems. From this, it's noticeable that Trick knows himself very well, he is sure about what he is doing, and what he is seeking. While Jesse is a total different character, who refuses to face himself, and denies both the past and the reality, prefering to be brainless rather than a man with deep thought. Another sharp contrast lies in the attitudes toward themselves. Trick thinks that "I'm only guessing at life, the only person I can write about is myself" (Oates, 1973, p.256); while Jesse views himself as a superman, who wants to change and save the whole world. Finally they both failed to realize themselves. In fact they are two failures in life just by different ways to solve the conflicts between world and individual. Thus their unfortunate sufferings from life is indeed a vivid reflection of people's life in the America.

Through Trick, it's easy to explore the deep feelings of Jesse. As a friend, Jesse is willing to confide to Trick. Since Jesse has no friends at all before, his real idea is known by nobody. To make up this, Oates alters the relation between Jesse and Trick, let readers acquire of Jesse's images not only through his colleague but also from the view of a friend, to whom Jesse will speak out his thoughts. Jesse confides that he wants to forget himself; he want to fix people up; he want to save everyone; he wants to perform miracles, and want miracle ordinary; he wants to do this impersonally because "where there's personality everything is confused—" (Oates, 1973, p.209). Also Oates expressed one kind of different ideas through the mouth of Trick, Trick judges that "You want to raise up the halt and the crippled, you want to raise the dead—a small ambition!" (Oates, 1973, p.234) Such judgement shows the absurdity of Jesse's idea. To make it worse, self-arrogant Jesse doesn't understand, nor believe what Trick says, or maybe Jesse just attempts to be ignorant of his words since Jesse has no other better ways to face the social turmoil.

The best exploration of Jesse's hypocrisy and inner fear lies in the brutal fight with Trick. Finally Jesse can't bear his honesty and bluntness anymore, because Trick exposes the cruel reality and empty soul of human beings, especially Jesse's. First Jesse is annoyed by Trick's letter to Hellen, in which Trick makes a declaration of his 'love' toward Hellen and opinion about Jesse as well. Especially Jesse is annoyed by the words 'a dangerous man', with 'a strange look'. What's worse, in the letter Trick delivers to Jesse, Trick doesn't hesitate to speak out the truth of Jesse frankly. "Your soul is as tough as the muscles of your body but my soul is flabby and drained and mealy from disuse….you can't imagine how ugly a face looks in that mirror, especially my face. I am always staring at myself. I am always pulling my cheeks to show my eyes edged with red and crazy. I look like an ape. I joke with myself in the mirror. You are a man

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who does not even bother looking at himself in the mirror, because you know just what he looks like. Always" (Oates, 1973, p.250). Obviously, Trick has made a vivid and full self-analysis, he views himself soulless, being drained out. In fact it's Jesse's image as well, who even dares not to look himself in the mirror. Actually Jesse is a real man without soul, failing to know himself.

In *Wonderland*, there are some poems written by Trick, which play irreplaceable roles upon the description of Jesse's characteristics. Just as Oates (1973) says in the novel, "a poet can express himself obliquely, in poems, he can say things that his friend won't allow him to say in the daylight!" (p.258). Take one of Trick's poems named "Song of Myself" for example, in which Trick compares oneself with a 'jelly', a 'vile jelly', that means a vicious jelly, a man without soul. It's equal to say that Trick, Jesse and all the people are soulless, being drained out, and exhausting. In fact the poem alone hits the nail on the head about the life of Jesse's, Trick's and many others'.

Above all, Jesse's image becomes richer and truer in the mirror of Trick. In fact they represent two different views about life, different ways to solve the conflicts between world and individuality. Thus their unfortunate suffering in life is indeed a vivid reflection of the whole Americans from 1930s to 1970s.

If Jesse's view about life being shown by Trick, then in the eyes of Anne and Reva, Jesse's idea about marriage and woman is described vividly. The two women are lovers of Jesse, respectively before and after marriage. Of course, Jesse holds only sexual desire toward them, attempting to find a peculiar protection against the outside world and his heart. Following is a detailed study about it in order to figure out what kind of personality Jesse possesses.

As to the relation with Anne, it can be interpreted that Jesse attempts to achieve transcendence through the sexual relation with her. Jesse feels certain that he is not abnormal, not alone. In Dreaming America: Obsession and Transcendence in the Fiction of Joyce Carol Oates, G. F. Waller (1979) compares Oates with the English novelist D. H. Lawrence and Oates, he said that, "the most obvious connection between Lawrence and Oates is their fascination with sexuality. Like Lawrence, Oates is fascinated with the power and the dynamic of sex. She focuses repeatedly on the numinous aura of sexuality, on how sexuality contributes to, or so often mocks, our attempts to order our lives..." (p.4) In light of this statement, it's easy to conclude that Jesse is seeking safety and protection through the body of Anne.

His attempt to be unaware of Anne's ignorance and other limitations, is the right evidence of Jesse's hypocrisy. When Jesse learns that Trick used to have a relation with Anne, Jesse becomes very angry. He gets to know what Anne marries is not him, but his identity as a doctor in the near future—"all these nurses, these clever little girls, hopes to marry doctors" (Oates, 1973, p.219). Ironically, even though Jesse has realized the fact that she doesn't love him, he refuses to acknowledge it and deceive himself that he is going to marry her soon, "it would work out". It exposes another facet of Jesse, hypocritical, timid, who dares not to accept the cruel fact.

If Jesse is still clear enough about his deed in Anne's company, at the time with Reva, Jesse's confusion becomes worse. After the marriage with Hellen, life is not as easy as what Jesse imagines before. For one thing, Jesse is greatly in debt to Hellen's father. For another, Jesse is unsatisfied with Hellen, who is reluctant to have babies and possesses some ideas that Jesse can't understand. Thus it's not exaggerated to regard Jesse as a loser being caught in life. Therefore it's emergent to find out a way to survive: the appearance of Reva is the solution that Jesse seeks.

Involved in deep corner, Jesse is not aware of his behavior and speech, most of the time he is in self-contradictory. Thus in this part most of conversations are instructed by Reva, Jesse just tries to answer and solve her puzzles. After twice meeting with Reva, Jesse falls in love with her crazily. While expressing his desire and demand for her, Jesse emphasizes that "he is permanently married". Such a paradox not only shocks Reva, but also readers can't help wondering the reasons behind it. Through Reva, the puzzle is solved. The fact is that Jesse himself is not clear-minded, how illogical what he is means how contradictory his inner world is. It's not love at all; it's only temporary self-loss. Jesse is a man of family-center, however it's too hard to hold a family in such a chaotic society, even he has a transient idea to give up the family, like his own father Willard Harte, who slaughters the whole family just because he can't support it.

To sum up, from Trick, Anne Mary and Reva Denk, it's not difficult to discern Jesse's deep heart. He is a hypocrite, a coward, a loser, living quite a miserable life due to certain social and personal reasons. He leads a negative life by escape and self-deception. In addition, Jesse is nearly denied by all the people around him. It's safe to say that Jesse doesn't gain recognition from them and doesn't ruminate too much in the face of their disapproval. At last it's the accident of his lovely daughter Shelley's departure from home awakes Jesse to the reality.

IV. A Journey of Self-improvement

According to what has been discussed above, self-construction is roughly realized under the influence of Other, meanwhile analysis has been made about the views of Self in different Others' eyes. It's obvious that almost all their opinions about Jesse is negative, in other words, actually Jesse failed to gain recognition from Others.

The theory of Hegel's master and servant exerts great influence upon Lacan's idea of self-construction. Hegel believes that the master is not inborn but recognized by the servant, and according to Andy Blunden (2007) "the master's self-certainty rests on the activity of a dependent, dominated being. By conquest, the master has made himself dependent on a dependent being. Mutual dependence is the truth of this relation" (p.192). It means only the recognition of master by the servants can leads to the humble position of servants in society. Thus Lacan concludes that the relation between Self and Other is also of mutual dependence. Self has to get recognition from Other in order to achieve

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wholeness.

Through Shelley's letters to Jesse, a conclusion can be drawn that there is quite a complex father-daughter relation, love and hatred together, which is resulted from Jesse's disability of normal love. Shelley is his favorite daughter, also the girl being severely examined and hurt one. Jesse's love for daughter is suffocating and compelling, no freedom at all. According to Fromm (1956), the love between father and daughter, should be communicative, on the basis of equality and freedom. Father should instruct children by the way of reasoning and hoping, patience and tolerance, not threat or autocratic. Father should allow the separation from his authority and be the owner of herself (p.36). Thus the strained relations between father and daughter, is caused by the self-isolated father Jesse.

The beloved Other can help to affirm the wholeness and intrinsic value of human beings. As Fromm (1956) says, "love, the answer to the problem of the human existence" (p.7). Ironically in *Wonderland*, due to father's dangerous love, Shelley is forced to leave home; owing to the love for daughter, Jesse starts to look for daughter at any price. When Jesse is trapped by the miserable life, the departure of Shelley fulfills his desire to be acknowledged and recognized. Jesse's courage and confidence is greatly dependent upon the news of beloved daughter Shelley. During the several months of Shelley's departure, Jesse feels almost exhausted and even too tired to work with patients, which used to be his favorite way of escaping from daily life. However when Jesse begins his journey of seeking Shelley, he feels energetic, even youthful. "He felt that nothing could stop him. He would drive to Toronto and find his daughter and bring her back home. She wants me to find her, he told his wife" (Oates, 1973, p.463).

Finally awake from the departure of Shelley, Jesse starts the journey of searching for Shelley at any price out of love. Deeply involved in the social reality, Jesse witnesses several social events at that time, such as antiwar demonstration, the hippies and drug-takers. In detail, Jesse has learned to think, to admit others' existence, and he has developed an ability of analysis of social phenomena. For example, Jesse once hated the crowds very much, however to find Shelley, Jesse is forced to be in the crowds. Jesse stares into it, trying to find a center as before. Since as a scientist Jesse believes that there is a center in the world and he is the center, but he realizes that actually it's unable to find any center, any single place to look. Based on this, Jesse draws the conclusion that, "Maybe the young people themselves felt it, these baffling sexless creatures with their long trousered legs and frizzy hair and laconic, pleasant faces passing him effortlessly, as if in a dream, having no center to them, no core, no place to get to. Jesse felt that if he put his hand out to touch one of these people he would touch nothing, his hand would grope hopelessly in the air" (Oates, 1973, p.465). It indicates Jesse has learned to observe and analyse social events gradually.

On the journey of searching for Shelley, Jesse also begins to examine his self-centered strategy. This is illustrated at the end of the novel, when he is blamed to be a devil both by Noel and Shelley, Jesse wonders "am I"? Such an open ending serves as an answer to his former question "Jesse Vogel: who was that?" (Oates, 1973, p.397). Different from the original edition of *Wonderland* (1971), Oates arranges such kind of way to end the story—Jesse killed Noel, and take the dying Shelley on the boat. Just as Samuel Chase Coale (1987) interprets that, "Violence alone seems capable of breaking through the boundaries of the Western ego" (p.120). However Oates makes some revisions in 1973, in which the story ended with Jesse's awaken, "am I a devil" out of the great force of his love toward Shelley. That's to say Oates employs a rhetorical question to suggest the beginning of Jesse's self-retrospect, which is the better way Oates has found for her character to get through the living predicament. It is love rather than violence, a fatherly love for his daughter.

V. Conclusion

In *Wonderland*, Oates mainly focuses on the life journey of Jesse, also many Others are arranged to provide another facets of Jesse's life. These others can be divided into three classes according to their different relations with Jesse. First class are his father figures who play crucial roles upon Jesse's self-construction. Second class is about Jesse's friend, including a male friend and two important female friends. Through their views, Jesse's personality becomes more authentic and more vivid. Third class refers to Jesse's family, who finally drives Jesse to reconsider himself, his past and his present life.

This article has done a detailed study of Jesse's life from the perspective of struggle between Self and Other. According to Lacan's theory, Self and Other are of mutual dependence, which can't exist without each other. In this paper, first there is a careful discussion about self-formation under Other's influence, then the examination of self-image in the mirror of Other. Meanwhile on the basis of Hegel's emphasis upon "recognition", it's learned Self has to get recognition from Others, otherwise Self is not complete or not meaningful. Finally Jesse begins his journey of seeking self since he fails to get recognition from the irreplaceable Other—family.

In short, Oates has made a vivid description about Jesse's life journey through many others' fate, which shows that actually Jesse's tragedy in life is shared by the whole American at that age. Due to some social factors and individual experience, Jesse possesses a shattered-personality and leads a tragical life. Finally Oates guides Jesse to find a way to survive the society and achieve self-wholeness by love. It's a kind of love in Erich Fromm's words, compounded of care, responsibility, respect, knowledge, in which giving is the expression of strength and source of mature joy. Therefore it's reasonable to reach the conclusion that, Oates holds intense interests about human existence and tries to explore solutions to deal with problems.

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English Language Teaching at Expenses of Thai Language Teaching for Urban Refugee Language Learners in Thailand: Social Inequalities Related to What Languages to Teach

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Abstract—**This inquiry on young refugee language learners presents findings that have been yielded from an empirical study and conducted over a period of 8 months in Thailand. This study took an angle in multidisciplinary fields of language teaching by examining socio-economic inequalities occurred to urban refugee children and adolescents resulted from their formal schooling interruption as closely in relation to what languages are taught in their humanitarian based language learning programs. A central argument throughout this paper has been balancing languages to teach for these young language learners by refocusing attentions on teaching needed Thai language that helps formal schooling interrupted refugee children and adolescents to resume their study in local Thai schools, accompanied by teaching globally-oriented English language. By the same token, while the promise of English language teaching and learning might empower young urban refugee students, English language teaching cannot be at expenses of Thai language teaching because the latter is urgently needed for these young urban refugees to continue their formal schooling and decreases inequalities.**

Index Terms—**English language teaching, Thai language teaching, urban refugee language learners**

I. Introduction

In discussing relationship between foreign/second language teaching and inequalities in societies resulted from formal schooling interruption, the needs of what languages to teach for marginalized minority groups such as young urban refugee students are frequently overlooked. A real example is given as follows: Teaching English language is commonly seen as a crucial resource for English as foreign/second language learners to access power, prestige, status, and socio-economic mobility. However, challenging traditional notions of teaching a powerful language such as English to decrease social inequalities, data obtained from urban refugee language learners in Thailand show otherwise. On condition that these young refugee language learners continue to study in English language programs provided by refugee shelters, they are in a disadvantaged position to not acquire needed Thai language competencies from their heterogeneous and linguistically diverse refugee peers and refugee English teachers, and are therefore unable to enroll in local Thai schools. Receiving English language education among these young urban refugees is at expenses of learning immediately needed Thai language to terminate their formal schooling interruption.

One of the causes of inequalities is access to schooling. As evidenced by data in this study, acknowledged factors that impact socio-economic inequality include formal schooling interruption among urban refugee children and adolescents. Often socio-economic inequalities between mainstream groups and minority refugee communities can partially be caused by continuation of formal schooling with the former and continuation of formal schooling interruption with the latter. Ideally, formal schooling interrupted refugee children and adolescents should be entitled with Thai language courses as preparation to enroll in local Thai schools. Humanitarian based language programs designed for urban refugee children and adolescents organized by nongovernment groups, nonetheless, fail to offer regular Thai language courses in preparing young refugee students with Thai language proficiencies needed to continue their formal schooling in Thailand. When English language teaching and Thai language teaching as two competing orientations in language teaching markets, English language teaching often foregrounds Thai language teaching in humanitarian based language learning programs, resulted from administrative decisions as well as urban refugee language learners' choices. Prioritizing English language teaching accompanied with discouraging Thai language teaching increases socio-economic inequalities for urban refugee children and adolescents from their Thai counterparts. To close this gap, this study suggests that beliefs and/or ideologies that promote English language teaching only should be contested. Moreover, Thai as a second language courses are recommended for formal schooling interrupted urban refugee students to enable them in resuming formal schooling in Thailand, ultimately shortening their socio-economic inequalities from their Thai counterparts.

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II. Background Review

A. Refugees and Asylum Seekers Resettle in Urban Areas of Thailand

In the world we are living today approximately eleven million people are displaced at a domestic level and transnational level(UNHCR, 2006). Suffering, hardship, misery, torment and adverse economy resulted from internal political unrest such as civil wars are evident especially when their victims come to live in our neighborhoods as refugees. More often than not wars generate enormous death tolls, disrupt accumulation of physical capitals and properties, and erode freedom in civil levels. Transnational migration occurs when these horrors displace population from their home countries to resettle in a new country. For the reason that civil conflicts, political, and religious persecutions by and large go on for many years, these forced migrants have been frequent and on the rise in numerous countries of the world. Those seeking asylum hope for refugee status being granted and individuals "owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his/her nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear is unwilling, to avail himself of the protection of that country" are categorized as refugees by the United Nations (Huguet & Punpuing, 2005).

Many countries have acknowledged an ethical responsibility to admit refugees and rendered humanitarian assistance to these extremely vulnerable persons. The Kingdom of Thailand is one of the largest shelters in the world for displaced people, refugees and asylum seekers. Millions of displaced people flee their homelands to escape war, long-term economic struggle, political or religious persecution, and violence by military to settle in Thailand (Huguet & Punpuing, 2005). Some asylum seekers from different countries come to Thailand and take residence in urban areas, because it has comparatively easy-to-meet visa requirements than other countries (Jesuit Refugee Service, n.d, online). Most of them come from countries of Afghanistan, Congo, Mainland China, Nepal, North Korea, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Vietnam. Sociolinguistically transnational refugee resettlements should be seen as a life-long process. Exploring needs in language teaching and learning among urban refugees is essentially a moral imperative to help them resettle in Thailand.

B. Issues of Language Teaching in Humanitarian Based Language Learning Programs in Thailand

Despite Thailand is a prominent receiving country for refugees and asylum seekers in almost worldwide migration and resettlement, yet there is increasingly a huge gap between humanitarian based language learning programs in Thailand and actual language needs among refugees. Data in this study show that these language learning programs at urban refugee shelters are at risk to create enormously large social inequality for urban refugee children and adolescents from their Thai counterparts, because of languages they do not offer to teach. On the one hand, formal schooling interrupted refugee children and adolescents do not receive regular Thai language assistance, but they are entitled to enroll in a local Thai school nearby their residence. As a result, they continue their formal schooling interruption and are thus not ready to enroll in local Thai schools. On the other hand, the extreme focus on English language teaching in a number of urban refugee language learning programs skips the immediate need for young refugee students to learn Thai language. To make the matter worse, English language teaching focused programs designed for young urban refugee students fail to provide a comprehensive curriculum with balanced developments in different subject matters suited for refugee children and adolescents in primary and secondary levels. In any case teaching English language alone cannot possibly make up refugee children' and adolescents' needs in learning other subjects, i.e., mathematics, science and social studies.

C. The Call to Teach Thai Language Regularly for Urban Refugee Children and Adolescents in Thailand

Despite the fact that learning English language has become a critical resource of gaining power, prestige, status, and socio-economic mobility in this age of globalization, we cannot rule out the need to teach a local language for urban refugees in countries where they resettle. Only when refugees become functionally communicative in Thai language do they begin to enjoy the rewards of living in this beautiful kingdom of Thailand. Data from this present inquiry show that learning Thai language can surely help urban refugees satisfy their fundamental needs and empower their self-esteem. Mastery of Thai language can help individual and communal refugees to successfully integrate into the mainstream Thai society while waiting for a third country to adopt them. There is emerging evidence from data in this current study to show that the attainment of any medium of wider communication, a nature language acquisition to its native speakers, turns out to be a huge task for transnational refugees if they do not receive any language education to learn common media of communication in their resettled countries. The lack of mastery over a common language is widely perceived as a frustrating limitation faced by cross-national refugees trying to adapt to a new environment. Learning a second language as medium of wider communication in a host country added life difficulties to these urban refugees. Ideally, language teaching programs provided for unwilling migrants should cater to meet their different needs in language and communication. These needs of language and communication might vary significantly from those other immigrants who are willing to move to Thailand. Despite occasional Thai language training courses are provided, in Thailand rarely do humanitarian based language learning programs consider urban refugee children's needs to learn Thai language in a regular Thai language program for 1-2 years before they are competent to enroll in nearby Thai schools.

Exploring research perspectives that frame the issue of language teaching for formal schooling interrupted refugee children and adolescents in Thailand, literature evidently show a positive effect on transnational refugees who receive second language education before they are placed in mainstream classrooms in a host country. Australia (Settlement

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English, n.d.), Canada (Adelman, 1990) and USA (Ellis, 2010), for example, prepare refugee children and adolescents with needed English as second language courses in enabling them to continue their formal schooling in their resettled English speaking countries. Nevertheless, data from this inquiry show that Thailand has produced little evidence of improvement in these humanitarian based language learning programs to help urban refugee children and adolescents learn Thai language regularly.

III. Methodology

To develop an understanding regarding contextualized factors that lead to the emergence of English language teaching at costs of Thai language teaching for formal schooling interrupted refugee children and adolescents in urban areas of Thailand, this study pursues the following research question in this contribution: what are contextualized factors that shape and influence foreign/second language learning among formal schooling interrupted urban refugee children and adolescents in Thailand and how can we do to meet their needs of different languages through language teaching.

A. Urban Refugee Sites and Young Refugee Language Learners in Thailand

Two main types of refugees and asylum seekers currently resettle in Thailand—urban refugees and camp-based refugees. The scope of this inquiry has been limited to understand urban refugee children and adolescents particularly in regard to their language learning experiences at humanitarian based language learning programs and what languages taught in these programs are in relation to social inequalities created by extension of their formal schooling interruption.

Multiple urban refugee research sites across Thailand are characterized that in English language courses, young children focused English programs seem to coexist comfortably with adult refugee English teachers and some American volunteers. This study delved into 80 young refugee students' encounters with language needs to resume their formal schooling and what languages are taught in their humanitarian based language learning programs. Informants' age are ranged from 6-7 years old to 18-19 years old. Nuanced understanding of language teaching and learning have been expanded and modified by interview and questionnaire responses, and observation notes from these young refugee language learners in urban shelters. Adult urban refugees volunteer to teach young students in their language learning centers. Their language learning classrooms are where linguistically and culturally diverse urban refugee children and adolescents are taught in English language isolated from daily activities of neighboring Thai speaking residents. These English language education for urban refugee children and adolescents are also instructional settings where young refugee students learn to be competent members to please refugee English teachers. These urban refugee children' and adolescents' learning takes place in classroom language domains that are in particular socio-cultural and linguistic groups.

B. Data Collection and Analysis

Through interviews, observations and questionnaires, this paper disclosed what languages to teach and what languages are needed for urban refugee children and adolescents to end their formal schooling interruption in Thailand. The researcher carefully triangulates data collected from individual interviews, group interviews, follow-up interviews, participant observations, non-participant observations, and responses from questionnaires.

IV. Results and Discussion

Three main contextualized factors that depicted a young urban refugee population characterized by a multifaceted set of English language teaching and learning are examined in details. First, data indicate a strong desire to learn English among young refugee students. Not surprisingly, data reveal that almost all urban refugee children and adolescents (98%, N=80) see a need to learn English language over Thai language. The powerful role of English language is influencing and shaping what are possibilities remained for languages other than English to teach in urban refugee settings in Thailand. Data point out that some urban refugee children and adolescents (60%, N=80) do not see a need to learn Thai language, because they do not want to enroll in a local Thai school but wait for a third country to adopt them. However, this paper argues that lack of Thai language speaking proficiencies among these refugee children and adolescents might put them in a disadvantaged position to prolong their length of formal schooling interruption. Data report estimated 3-4 years in average of formal schooling interruption for English language learning focused participants. By marked contrast, urban refugee children and adolescents (30%, N=80) who intend to enroll in local Thai schools see a need to learn Thai language. Data report estimated 1.5-2 years in average of formal schooling interruption for Thai language learning focused refugee children and adolescents. However, there are unfortunately no regular Thai language teaching programs provided for these urban refugee children and adolescents who need to enroll in local Thai schools and terminate their formal schooling interruption, because Thai language learning programs are only provided periodically or occasionally as non-formal language education for adult learners.

Note that different language learning programs at urban refugee shelters across Thailand are differing in their size of student body and teaching staffs, geographical locations in the Kingdom of Thailand, and available language teaching and learning resources. Thus, data gathered in this present inquiry reported in this paper cannot be generalized and/or

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applicable to every language learning programs at urban refugee shelters across Thailand. Data presented below in table 1 and figure1 are merely estimated numbers on the basis of accessibility of limited data.

TABLE 1:
RESPONSES OF INFORMANTS WHEN ASKED WHAT AFFECTS THEM TO LEARN FOREIGN/SECOND LANGUAGES

Contextualized factors	# of responses from 80 informants	% of responses from 80 informants
Seeing a need to learn English language	78	>90%
Heterogeneous and linguistically diverse refugees see a need to use English language as a common medium of communication	60	75%
Thai friends and Thai neighbors live close to refugee's residence	20	25%
Media: Newspapers, magazines, TV, and radio		
No opinion/unclear/neutrality		

Note: informants can choose more than one contextualized factors.

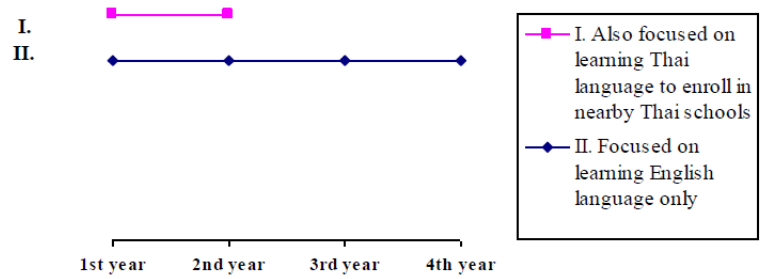

Figure 1: Relations between Foreign/Second Language Learning Choices and Time Length of Formal Schooling Interruption

i. Young urban refugee language learners see a need to learn Thai language and intend to enroll in Thai schools nearby their residence: Estimated 1.5-2 years of formal schooling interruption

ii. Young urban refugee language learners keep staying in English language learning programs and do not see a need to learn Thai language: Estimated 3-4 years of formal schooling interruption

Continued finding reports in this study, secondly, data show a need to use English language as a common medium of communication among heterogeneous and linguistically diverse refugees from Pakistan, Sri Lankan, Congo, and other countries. Even if urban refugees settle in a predominantly Thai language environment, their shelters and service centers except household language domains may not reflect the fact that the medium of communication is in Thai oral discourse. The data speak to the fact that heterogeneous and linguistically diverse urban refugees converse to each other in English language as a common medium of communication and as a medium of instruction in language learning programs. This contrast is dramatically lost in rural refugee camps, especially those who live with homogenous Burmese peers. In contrast to rural refugees who maintain their native languages within their homogeneous camps, urban refugees stated that heterogeneous and linguistically diverse peers have more effect on their increasingly use of English language as a common medium of communication when they cannot understand each others' native languages. Furthermore, data from this study contribute to current understandings of foreign/second language teaching in the context of transnational urban refugee communities by arguing that urban refugee children' and adolescents' desires to learn English language over Thai language are partially resulted from English language learning programs available and free to them. Data speak to a fact that learning English language or Thai language could be highly specific to refugee's language learning programs accessible to them. However, this study cannot go beyond its data to infer what expected outcomes are when Thai language learning programs are regular, available and free to urban refugee children and adolescents.

Third, the analysis shows that an immediate language contact with a predominant Thai language domain in Thailand has little effect or almost no effect on shaping everyday practices of English language among urban refugee communities. The Royal Thai Government did not sign 1951 Refugee Convention, so it does not have laws and permanent systems to decide whether a person is a refugee (see legal services in Bangkok Refugee Center, online). Moreover, the 1979 Immigration Act states that illegal immigrants, i.e., those without a passport, a valid visa to stay, and a work permit to get employed in Thailand, are subject to arrest, detention and deportation. Thus, urban refugees are struggling and in desperate need, seeking out a life in a hostile environment as they are not recognized as refugees by the Royal Thai government. As illegal aliens, they confront abuse, exploitation, hostility, language difficulties, prejudice, threats, and confusing legal status, and hence are subject to arrest, detention, deportation and human

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warehousing. Limited or no speaking proficiency in Thai language is dependent on the frequency of language contacts with linguistically diverse refugee peers as well as outside speakers of the predominant Thai language. Within a predominantly Thai language environment, informants assert that their less frequent language contacts with Thai language speakers outside their refugee shelters may have, nonetheless, negative effect on their Thai language learning. Note that Thai administrators and Thai social workers communicate with urban refugees in English language. For security reasons, the data reported here are evident that most urban refugees have less language contacts with outside Thai native speakers unless absolutely necessary. Although Thai government allows non-government religious organizations in collaboration with United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to provide shelters for illegal immigrants such as refugees and asylum seekers, Thai polices can arbitrarily arrest them and ask for bribes. Because some urban refugees rely on non-profit organizations and humanitarian assistance for their food supply, they might not see a need to learn Thai language to make a living in Thailand. However, other urban refugees who need to make a living in Thailand have fairly more frequencies of language contacts with Thai language speakers. It is very unfortunate but true that relatively isolated language socialization within diverse linguistic refugee communities greatly hinder urban refugee children and adolescents from acquiring needed Thai language proficiencies to continue their formal schooling in local Thai schools. To assume that young urban refugee children can be placed into mainstream Thai speaking schools without preparations in their Thai language competencies and proficiencies is beyond the scope of this current inquiry.

In combination with above three contextualized factors that affect teaching and learning of foreign/second languages among urban refugees in Thailand—a strong desire to learn English among young refugee students, a need to use English language as a common medium of communication among heterogeneous and linguistically diverse refugees, and an immediate language contact with a predominant Thai language domain in Thailand has little effect or almost no effect on shaping everyday practices of English language among urban refugee communities, now this paper shifts its attention to emphasize some findings. Challenging traditional notions of acquiring a foreign/second language of immediate medium of wider communication in a host country, the data from this current study prove that the predominantly Thai language domain plays a minimal role having little effect on the most dominant English language learning occurred among urban refugee children and adolescents in Thailand. In other words, most informants assert that they do not see an immediate need to acquire Thai language despite its demands, but data speak directly to the fact that they see a desperate need to learn English oral and written discourse. Data from this study propose to shift our perspective from viewing foreign/second language teaching as a focus on an immediate medium of wider communication, i.e., Thai language, for urban refugees to acquiring a globally-oriented foreign/second language, i.e., English language, in a resettled host country, i.e., Thailand. Note that practices of language teaching and learning reported from data in this present inquiry can only be limited to speak the fact for local contexts of some urban refuge shelters in Thailand. They do not meant to be generalize-able for other individuals and groups with similar exiled backgrounds in different contexts.

V. Concluding Remarks and Recommendations

This present inquiry concludes with the following analysis: What has held back these humanitarian based language learning programs to prepare urban refugee students ready for resuming and continuing their formal schooling is that with extremely focus on teaching English language only, there has not been an accompanying regular Thai language program to teach Thai language.

Qualitative records from this paper add to our current understandings of young urban refugee's language learning issues and how they are in relation to formal schooling interrupted problems among them in Thailand. This paper urges that Thai as a second language programs should be established by UNHCR in meeting the needs of formal schooling interrupted urban refugee children and adolescents to continue their formal schooling in Thailand. English language only curriculum and English language focused programs accessible to refugee children and adolescents could be problematic, because English language courses alone cannot cover what urban refugee children and adolescents need in other subject areas and skills. Just because these urban refugee children (> 90%, N=80) express a strong desire to only learn English language does not mean that they do not need to develop other knowledge and skills from a variety of subject contents. These urban refugee children and adolescents are too young to make their own decisions on whether they should be only entitled to learn English language alone or they should be entitled also to learn subjects, especially Thai language, other than English language in helping them end formal schooling interruption. These educational language policy decisions should be given to UNHCR and grass-root religious groups who organize urban refugee services to make. Thus, implications of this study are geared for language policy makers, literacy planners, language educators, foreign/second language teachers and anyone interested in meeting the needs of language, communication and formal schooling continuation for urban refugee children and adolescents. With decreasing social inequality in mind, this article is intended to bring together scholars from a variety of disciplines, graduate students, social workers and anyone interested in helping urban refugee children and adolescents to shorten their length of formal schooling interruption in Thailand by providing their needed Thai language courses.

This present inquiry thus suggests the following words: what remains the core challenge for humanitarian based language learning programs at multiple urban refugee sites in Thailand is the balance that should be made between the

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necessary regular Thai language teaching, which is to end formal schooling interruption for urban refugee children and adolescents in decreasing their socio-economic inequalities, and the need to teach English language.

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Kurt Vonnegut's *Slaughterhouse-Five*: A Postmodernist Study

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***Abstract*—This study tries to analyze Kurt Vonnegut's *"Slaughterhouse-Five"* from a postmodernist point of view. The concepts used are mostly from a range of literary and psychological resources. Vonnegut applies some narrative techniques which closely match those of the postmodernist diegetic process. The narrative has a potentially representative content which opens one's horizons toward new sources of meaning and conceptual interpretation. The focal point, in this study, is to examine the ontological level, stream of narration, fragmentation, parody and irony to see how tangibly these terms agree with the very context of the above-mentioned novel and to find out whether the purely abstract terms extracted from postmodernist theory can be concretized in a practical form. Furthermore, this study aims at scrutinizing in detail the frequency and the possibility of the postmodernist narrative elements in the very fabric and texture of fictional narrative in general.**

***Index Terms*—postmodernism, *Slaughterhouse -Five*, metanarrative, Vonnegut**

I. Introduction

The study starts with a brief introduction of Postmodernism, and a short summary of *Slaughterhouse- Five*, which is followed by the postmodernist analysis of *Slaughterhouse- Five*, and finally the study comes up with its conclusion.

II. Postmodernism

A great deal of postmodernist theory depends on the maintenance of a skeptical attitude: and here the philosopher Jean-François Lyotard's contribution is essential. He argued in his *La condition postmoderne* (published in French in 1979, in English in 1984) that we now live in an era in which legitimizing 'master narratives' are in crisis and in decline. These narratives are contained in or implied by major philosophies, such as Kantianism, Hegelianism, and Marxism, which argue that history is progressive, that knowledge can liberate us, and that all knowledge has a secret unity. The two main narratives Lyotard is attacking are those of the progressive emancipation of humanity – from Christian redemption to Marxist Utopia – and that of the triumph of science. Lyotard considers that such doctrines have 'lost their credibility' since the Second World War. He (1984) defines *postmodern* as incredulity towards metanarratives.

These metanarratives traditionally serve to give cultural practices some form of legitimation or authority. (The legitimation of Marxist or Freudian theories thus would stem from their claim, not widely accepted by now, that they are based on the principles or metanarrative of science.) Another example of this would be the textbook history of the writing of the Constitution of the United States, by the Founding Fathers, along with its subsequent legislative enactments. This grand historical narrative with its constitutional 'founding principles' is still very much a going concern in current disputes in the United States about the limits of free speech, the right to abortion, and the right of American private citizens to bear arms. Another simple example of metanarrative is the Marxist belief in the predestined and privileged function of the proletariat, with the party as its ally, in bringing about a revolution, and in the Utopia which is supposed to follow, when 'the state has withered away'. In the period since 1945, the governments of many formerly colonized territories have developed similarly would-be masterful political narratives about the history of nationalist struggle. It is difficult to avoid such narratives, and nearly all nation-states have them.

Although there are good liberal reasons for being *against* such 'grand narratives' (on the grounds that they do not allow for disputes about value, and often enough lead to totalitarian persecution), the plausibility of Lyotard's claim for the decline of metanarratives in the late 20th century ultimately depends upon an appeal to the cultural condition of an intellectual minority. The general *sociological* claim that such narratives are in decline in our period looks pretty thin, even after the collapse of state-sponsored Marxism in the West, because allegiances to large-scale, totalizing religious and nationalist beliefs are currently responsible for so much repression, violence, and war – in Northern Ireland, Serbia, the Middle East, and elsewhere. (Postmodernists tend not to be well informed about current practices in science and

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religion.) It is obvious to any reader of the newspapers that men and women are still more or less willing to kill one another in the name of grand narratives every day. Indeed, the reason why academic postmodernists seemed so secure in their hostile analysis of the American and European societies around them in the 1970s may well have derived from the fact that these societies were not torn apart by contrary ideologies. Some thoughts about the rival claims of Islam and Judaism in the Middle East, or of Marxism and the democratic process in Eastern Europe, might have led to different conclusions. But the skepticism about commitments to master narratives promoted by Lyotard, and echoed by Derrida and many other postmodernists, had a strong appeal to a generation brought up in Western democracies. They were liberated to some degree from theology by existentialism, impressed by the resistance offered to capitalism and the military-industrial complex in 1968, suspicious of American 'imperialist' pretensions, and perhaps more importantly needed to escape the deadeningly Manichaean ideological platitudes of the Cold War period.

The result was that the basic attitude of postmodernists was skepticism about the claims of any kind of overall, totalizing explanation. Lyotard was not alone in seeing the intellectual's task as one of 'resistance', even to 'consensus', which 'has become an outmoded and suspect value'. Postmodernists responded to this view, partly for the good reason that by doing so they could side with those who didn't 'fit' into the larger stories – the subordinated and the marginalized – against those with the power to disseminate the master narratives. Many postmodernist intellectuals thus saw themselves as avant-garde and bravely dissentient. This heralded a pluralist age, in which, as we shall see, even the arguments of scientists and historians are to be seen as no more than quasi narratives which compete with all the others for acceptance. They have no unique or reliable fit to the world, no certain correspondence with reality. They are just another form of fiction.

Of course, an opposition to such narratives (particularly holistic or totalitarian ones) is an absolutely traditional liberal concern. Much significant postmodernist writing has therefore turned on articulating this kind of skepticism for essentially liberal ends, as for example in the work of Edward Said, who in his *Orientalism* (1978) attempted to show the distorting effects of the projection of the Western grand narrative of imperialism upon Oriental societies. For the imperialist saw himself as the representative of a rational, ordered, peaceful, and law-abiding framework, and defined the Orient as the opposite of this (for example, as the 'muddle' Forster found in *A Passage to India*), and had the confidence that his representation of 'them' – his narrative of 'Orientalism' – would prevail. The grand imperial story of progressive development was superimposed on a merely local – and, what is more, 'deviant' – Oriental practice. In all this Said follows Foucault, and the Euhemerism of the Greeks and of Nietzsche, in believing that such imposing political grand narratives are at best mystificatory attempts to keep some social groups in power, and others out of it. As Said notes, when Flaubert slept with an Egyptian courtesan, Kuchuk Hanem, he wrote to Louise Colet that 'the oriental woman is no more than a machine; she makes no distinction between one man and another man'. In so doing (and in his subsequent novels) he 'produced a widely influential model of the Oriental woman'. But within this influential narrrative, 'she never spoke of herself, never represented her emotions, presence or history.' We can imagine how different her own account might indeed have been, but the two frameworks for narrative, Flaubert's and -Kuchuk Hanem's, seem to be culturally incommensurable; hence a typical postmodernist conclusion, that universal truth is impossible, and relativism is our fate.

III. Argument

A. Slaughterhouse-Five

This novel does not follow the realistic or modernist trends and defies the conventional forms of plot. As a postmodernist novel it is created in fragmented forms. The fragments include the life of Billy based on Vonnegut's life, his fictionalized experience of fire-bombing in Dresden and the Tralfamadorian plot as in confrontation with life on earth .The fragmented parts of Billy Pilgrim, life in the different sections are linked through time-travels .Billy Pilgrim was an infantry scout during world war II and becomes an optometrist after the war. The novel begins with Billy serving as an American soldier in World War II. He is captured by Germans and is taken to Dresden .The city is destroyed by an air raid, but Billy and one hundred soldiers survive the raid. Then he returns to Ilium, New York and becomes a successful optometrist; he marries Valencia, the daughter of a rich optometrist, he has two children, Barbara and Robert; .Barbara marries an optometrist and Robert becomes a member of the famous Green Berets in Vietnam. On the night of his daughter's wedding, Billy is kidnapped by some aliens and is taken to another planet called Tralfamadore where he is mated with an Earthling movie, star Montana Wildhack .After returning to earth, he continues practicing optometry. On his way to a convention, he has a plane crash and is taken to hospital .After his recovery, he still talks about Tralfamadorians and suffers from the nervous breakdown of his experience in war. Consequently, everybody including his own daughter accuses him of insanity, He finally decides to travel to New York city and appear on a radio program to talk about life on Tralfamadore and their wisdom.

B. The Ontological Dimension of Kurt Vonnegut's Slaughterhouse-Five

In analyzing, *Slaughter-house Five*, what we come across is mainly concerned with the "worlds in confrontation" (McHale, 1983, p. 60). In fact, the world of Dresden is "in confrontation" with Tralfamadore as an imaginary world where the norms of "Earthlings are violated" (p.10). This aspect of *Slaughter-House Five* does not deal with resolutions but ironically instigates some philosophical problematizations in the eye of the readers.

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As was mentioned before, there must be a "psychological conceivability" in the postmodernist fiction to convey the message of ontology to readers. This aim is remarkably achieved through what McHale calls "transworld identity". In *Slaughter-House Five,* Billy pilgrim shoulders the responsibility in gaining the goal as a "transworld identity". Billy was "taken through a time warp" (p.26) by the Tralfamadorians" so that he could be on Tralfamadore for years, and still be away from Earth for only a microsecond". In other words, we, readers encounter "a confrontation between our world and a world whose norms permit time- travel" (p.17).

The concept of time is one of the main issues which has been problematically proposed. What the Tralfamadorian life seems to describe, demystifies the issue. The following quotation enhances the point.

I am a Tralfamadorian, seeing all time as you might see a stretch of the Rocky Mountains. All time is all time. It does not change. It does not lend itself to warnings or explanations. It simply is. Take it moment by moment, and you will find that we are all, as I've said before, bugs in amber.(Vonnegut, 1969, pp.85-86).

As a matter of fact, time is ontologically problematized here. But the important point is that a postmodernist reading here does not lead to a resolution through flaunting Tralfamadore as the utopian world of "Time". We are just confronted with irresolvable questions. The following description ontologically foregrounds what the philosophy of time points out:

They were two feet high, and green, and shaped like plumber's friends. Their suction cups were on the ground, and their shafts, which were extremely flexible, usually pointed to the sky… the creatures were friendly, and they could see in four dimensions. They pitied Earthlings for being able to see only three. They had many wonderful things to teach Earthlings, especially about time. P.(26)

Another closely-related term which highlights the ontological level of Vonnegut's *Slaughter-House five* is "short circuit". Vonnegut has applied short circuiting in different parts of his novel. Here, the author himself acts as a "transworld identity" between the real world and the fictionalized world but we should bear in mind that he "fictionalizes himself" (p. 215). In one part of the novel, we come across some Americans who used latrines to relieve themselves, but unexpectedly we are confronted with the author:

Billy looked inside the latrine. The wailing was coming from in there. The welcome feast had made them as sick as volcanoes. The buckets were full or had been kicked over… in American near Billy wailed that he had excreted everything but his brains. Moments later he said, "there they go, there they go." He meant his brains. That was I , that was me. That was the author of this book (p. 125).

The interesting point concerning time is the way Tralfamadorians regard death. In their viewpoint "Death is a mundane entity owing to the four-dimensional outlook they possess as other-worldly creatures:

The most important thing I learned on Tralfamadore was that when a person dies he only appears to die. He is still much alive in the past, so it is very silly for people to cry at his funeral. All moments, past, present, and future, always have existed, always will exist. The Tralfamadorians can look at a all the different moments just the way we can look at Rocky Mountain, for instance. (p. 27)

Death has been emphatically foregrounded by the novel. The use of the phrase 'so it goes" after each death description also problematizes the world of the dead and the world of the living." Postmodernist writing enables us to experiment with imagining our own deaths, to rehearse Our own deaths (McHale, 1983, p. 232), the problematization of the concept of time shows "the ontological boundary that we are all certain to experience " (p. 231). Tralfamadorian does not seem to be able to avoid the concept of death since he believes death is a predestined concept. This issue leads to another ontologically foregrounded issue being regarded as free will.

Billy Pilgrim says something about his death which triggers some ontological unanswered questions, he says, "I, Billy pilgrim, will die, have died, and always will die on February thirteen, 1976" (141, ch6). His comments point to a predestined situation in life: accordingly, the Tralfamodorians make a lot of ironic comments on Free will: ''I've visited thirty-one inhabited planets in the universe, and I have studied reports on one hundred more. Only on Earth is there any talk of free wil''l. (Vonnegut, 1969, p. 86)

While ironically, we are invited to see "free will" as inaccessible on earth. From the very beginning, the concept of free will has been implicitly foregrounded because of the fact that all the events are foreshadowed ironically and more significantly the beginning and end of the novel as predestined qualities have been earmarked:

This one is a failure, and had to be, since it was written by a pillar of salt. It begins like this:

Listen:

Billy Pilgrim has come unstuck in time.

It ends like this:

Poo-tee-weet?(p.22)

When Billy was taken to Tralfamadore as a kidnapped Earthling, He "inquired at last: 'why me?" and the Tralfamadorim reaction, as a result, stimulates the ontological preoccupations of literary readers in different perspectives. This is what they say in response to Billy's question:

That is a very Earthling question, to ask, Mr. Pilgrim why you? Why us for that matter? Why anything? Because this moment simply is. Have you ever seen bugs trapped in amber? … "well, here we are, Mr. Pilgrim, trapped in the amber of this moment. There is no why.(pp. 76-77)

To make the problematization of fate harmonious with "psychological conceivability". The narrator gives an

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anecdote of an American prisoner of war who is punched in the mouth by a German soldier:

The American was astonished. He stood up shakily, spitting blood. He'd tow teeth knocked out. He had meant no harm by what he'd said evidently, had no idea that the guard would hear and understand "why me?" he asked the guard. The guard shoved him back into ranks . "Vy you? Vy any body?" he said.(p.91)

The last statement triggers the mind of the reader who confronts the same question in two different ontological situations and leads him/her to a philosophical problematization of fate and free will as subjectively constructed by human beings. That is to say, reality is just a human construct and a plurality of realities are "in confrontation" to denaturalize the concept of free will as authentic.

In *Slaughterhouse- Five*, the ontological dimension goes beyond the limitations and includes the taken-for-granted concepts of death, free will, Christianity and Bible, the story of Adam and Eve, biological characteristics of human beings and so forth to denote the fact that we are still very far away from knowledge and no single idea is right. The realization of Adam and Eve in different situations foregrounds the philosophical preoccupations of the novel with "the mode of existence," Billy once "stared into the patina of the corporal's boots' and saw Adam and Eve in the golden depth" (p. 53). The question of Adam and Eve as the source of existence leads Billy to the engagement with "where had he come from, and where should he go, now?" (p. 124). The structural pattern of *Slaughterhouse- Five* points to the fact that it has an ontology of it own which provides the readers with the capability to think about existence.

C. Stream of Narration as a Technique in Slaughterhouse-Five

Stream of narration is, as I pointed out before, mainly concerned with narrative conventions. It defies linearity and foregrounds the ontological world of the text as producing different meanings and interpretations by the readers. It no longer admits the consciousness of the individual author as authentic, but through its discontinuous portrait of the narrative technique, helps the readers to produce a variety of meanings to denaturalizes "narrative continuity' (Hucheon, 1988, p.13). Vonnegut starts describing something, chooses a key point in that matter, elaborates on that key point so that the reader's mind is distracted, then he goes back to the issue at hand. In the first chapter the narrator is diegetically describing the process of writing his novel using realistic points, but all of a sudden, the process turns to be the reality of the text because he is revealed as one of the characters in the narrative of his novel:

One end of the wallpaper was the beginning of the story, and the other end was the end, there was all that middle part which was the middle,…. The end, where all the lines stopped, was a beet field on the Ebbe, outside of Hall,… we were formed in ranks, with Russian soldiers guarding us-Englishmen, Americans thousand of us about to stop being prisoners of war.(Vonnegut, 1969, pp. 5-6)

The reader is shocked when he/she comes across the intrusion of the narrator himself into the narrative which is supposed to be written by him and ontologically the stream of narration shatters the boundary between illusion and reality in a problematizing situation.

In *Slaughterhouse- Five*, different layers of narration are juxtaposed, so that no single, linear, logical sequence of events can be traced. The reader is in a constant mood of suspense and uncertainty; some times, we may confront a sequentiality, but we are disillusioned as soon as the narrative itself is fragmented- such handling of narrative triggers the sense of undecidablity in Derridean terms and points to the fact that narrative itself is something arbitrary and pluralizes its interpretations in various situations based on the layer surfaced through the viewpoints of thoughtful readers.

Conventional narratology reflects harmonious minds and intellectual stability among readers. In postmodernist novels, narrative based on traditional norms is regarded as ideologically constructed and can not reflect the disordered and chaotic situation of man. In describing war, in *Slaughterhouse- Five* only a shattered and disintegrated narrative can fully transfer the sense of anxiety and disturbance to the readers.

Stream of narration shows that narrative techniques are not natural phenomena behind all literary masterpieces. In addition, one of the important functions of stream of narration in *Slaughter house- Five* is that it defies a specific plot, setting, characterization, or denouement in the novel. In chapter one, Vonnegut realistically says that:

I think the climax of the book will be the execution of poor old Edgar Derby, "The irony is so great. A whole city gets burned down, and then this one American foot soldier is arrested in the ruins for taking a teapot. And he's given a regular trial, and then he's shot by a firing squad.(p. 4)

The reader expects the climax of the narrative to be exactly the same, the event described here happens more or less, but this climax is never actualized since postmodernist narrative denaturalizes the notion of realistic climax as mundane and ideologically orientated. To defy the climax and to problematize the narrative, Vonnegut creates a stream of narration in which the events can not be logically related so much so that no beginning, middle or end can be traced to follow the climax and other narrotological aspects.

D. Fragmentation

In *Slaughterhouse -Five*, fragmentation as a postmodernist technique is obtained through a kind of schizophrenic dissociation of the thoughts and observations" of Billy Pilgrim 'through whom we see the world". (Matz, 2004, p. 54) He constantly blends reality and illusion so that a single trend can not be observed in his descriptions. He mostly applies his schizophrenic mood to the context using time- travels. The noteworthy comment about postmodernist narrative is that fragmentation mostly reflects the fragmented and chaotic circumstances of postmodern man. Postmodernist novels

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make an effort to portray their fragmented narratives based on the above-mentioned criteria. They believe that they display reality as it is, disordered and simultaneously fragmented.

Narrative fragmentation is the best strategy in problematizing the traditional norms of plot, structure and time. Jason Dawley makes a precious comment as follows:

In the novel *Slaughterhouse -Five*, Kurt Vonnegut uses fragmentation of time, structure and character in order to unify his non-linear narrative. Vonnegut's main character, Billy Pilgrim travels back and forth in his own life span 'paying random visits to all events in between' (SF 23). The result is Billy's life is presented as a series of episodes without any chronological obligations (1).

Accordingly, what comes to the minds of the readers is a series of traditionally unrelated elements which open new horizons for the shocked readers and leave them with so many unanswered questions in a contradictory style.

Back to schizophrenia as a basic principle in postmodernist fragmentation, we can consider the effects of a suppressed childhood, war and a plane crash on Billy's split personality. Here, we do not encounter a realistic or even modernist characterization. Billy possesses fragments of both realist and modernist characters which are contradictorily existent in him. This quality leads us to uncertainty and suspense and directs our attention to the denaturalization of characterization as propagating metanarratives. The juxtaposition of his role as child, soldier, optometrist and parent completely disobeys the reader's expectations. R.D. Laing comes up with the following statements concerning what happens in a state of schizophrenia:

The person who has entered this inner realm… will find himself going, or being conducted… on a Journey… we respect the voyager, the explorer, the climber, the spaceman. (qtd . in Anja welling, p. 11)

In *Slaughterhouse- Five* "Billy either travels in time to Tralfamadore , or he is abducted by a flying saucer " (welling, p. 11) which gives an account of his schizophrenic situation.

Fragmentation does not just include fragmented narratives, it also includes pictures, graphs, and symbols. Montana Wildhack is the character to whom Billy makes love in the Tralfamadorian Zoo. She wears 'around her neck a silver chain with a heart-shaped locket hanging form it-between her breasts" (133). Later on, we observed a picture of chain with a locket on which something is carved as follows ''God grant me the serenity to accept the things I can not change, courage to change the things I can, and wisdom to tell the difference''. (Vonnegut, 1969, p. 209)

In his office as an optometrist, Billy has the same prayer on the wall which expresses "his method for keeping going" (p. 60). Here the reader confronts a "dual-medium" text with different fragments here and there. McHale believes that this characteristic gives a kind of "simultaneity" to the text. "ideally their visual and verbal components should be "read" simultaneously' (1983, p.190) True simultaneity is unachievable in a verbal medium" but postmodernist narrative makes an attempt to reach its aim to some extent, Jason Dawley expresses some practical comments in this regard:

The use of fragmentation in *Slaughterhouse- Five* goes for beyond simply dividing the text into short sections. Vonnegut uses fragmentation to clarify Billy's character to illustrate the Tralfamadorians' time theory, and to maintain the Dreseden bombing as an ongoing atrocity. All these elements interweave in order to give uniformity to a text that, at first glance, seems to be going in all different directions. (3)

The important point here is that postmodern narrative has been implicitly stated by Tralfamadorians as theoric, because of fragmentations ' there is no past, present or future in *Slaughter -House Five*". As Jason Dawley says the Tralfamadorian style of looking at universe is like looking at "a stretch of the Rocky Mountains ".That is to say, there is no beginning, no middle ore end in the post modernist novels as Rocky Mountains are viewed simultaneously without any fragments intervening with the view point.

Billy's schizophrenic state is widespread in the novel, even his own daughter Barbara thinks that he is going crazy, but his schizophrenia is ontologically problematized in the party where " the barbershop quartet of optometrist , "the Febs" sang "(172) Billy feels terribly sad here but he does not have any time travel or fragmented life after that. Later on he just associates the song with some of his bad experience self-consciously which is more paranoid than schizophrenic. But all in all "this is a novel in the telegraphic schizophrenic manner of tales of the planet Tralfamadore, where the flying saucers come from peace" (1)

E. Parody as a Postmodernist Device in Slaughterhouse-Five

As mentioned before, in this novel, we observe a parodic perspective of "science fiction" and war documentary" (Hutcheon, 1988, p. 44). This pattern is widely used in the structure of the narrative. The key point here is that none of these two generic qualities are preferred and no new form is rendered out of the two genres. What we get as readers, is the problematization of genres as metanarratives.

The blending of high and low literature in *Slaughterhouse- Five* causes uncertainty and suspension in the readers' mind. According to Anja welling in chapter one a woman who is a colleague of the narrator eats " a three musketeers candy Bar" which is an example of "high literature" the three musketeers was written by Alexander Duma, the same parodic pattern is observed in Billy's comrades including Roland Weary and two scouts who "called them selves 'the three musketeers"; but the point behind the above-mentioned examples is that Duma's masterpiece is eaten as a candy by a writer and his title is given to three foot soldiers not as a nostalgic view of the past but as an "ironic rethinking of the past"; Therefore, the notion of war is degraded and the suspicion of the open-minded readers who are shocked by the parody is increased. So much so that the realistic mode of previous eras is under estimated .Here, Patricia Waugh in

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Metafiction presents an argument which helps to underpin the ironic parody of realism:

Realism presents history as linear chronology, presents characters in the terms of liberal humanism, allows for the possibility of free will and responsible moral choice. But the novel implies that events like Dresden invalidate such liberal assumptions…. Tralfamadore is, in fact, explicitly an aesthetic fantasy world premised upon a rejection of the philosophical and aesthetic assumptions underpinning realism. (1988, p. 128).

We can trace the ironic parody of realism all over the text. Even more surprisingly, modernism has been ironically parodied. In chapter one, the Love song of J. Alfred Prufrock has been parodied:

We saw waterfalls, too, streams jumping off cliffs into the valley of the Delaware. There were lots of things to stop and see and then it was time to go, always time to go. The little girls were wearing white party dresses and black party shoes, so strangers, would know at once how nice they were. 'Time to go, girls,' I'd say and we would go.(Vonnegut, 1969, p. 12)

The ironic viewpoint behind this parody which is based upon Eliot's poem, is, in my opinion, to defamiliarize the concept of war; I thinks what is aimed at is not the theme of the poem, but modernism itself has been shown as inadequate in portraying the concept of war, here, we can refer to what Russian formalists say as quoted by Patricia Waugh:

Parody develops out of the realization of the inadequacies of a certain convention. Not merely an unmasking of a non-functioning system, it is also a necessary and creative process by which new forms appear to revitalize the tradition and open up new possibilities (1988, p.50) .

As was evident, modernism is not regarded as a "non-functioning system" but its placement in a new form "opens up new possibilities" in a defamiliarized and problematized situation in the postmodernist narrative.

F. Metafictional Features of Slaughterhouse-Five

Slaughter-House Five as a self-conscious, contradictory, pluralized and metafictional novel problematizes the realistic narrative forms to a high extent. But this is done through the ironic metafiction or "metafictional parody" (Waugh, 1988, p.67). The following example clarifies the issue:

As a trafficker in climaxes and thrills and characterization and wonderful dialogue and suspense and confrontations, I had outlined the Dresden story many times. The best outline I ever made, or anyway the prettiest one, was on the back of a roll of wallpaper. (p. 5)

Here, metafictional parody has been implicitly stated; a roll of paper dose not have a beginning, middle or end as postmodernist narrative does not follow any of the realistic techniques.

At the beginning of the narrative, the narrator says that "all this happened, more or less" (p.1). But, we, as readers are confused because of the fact that:

The book is defined as a novel, and a novel usually has the characteristic feature that it is fictitious. The first question the reader is confronted with is the question of truth. (Welling, p. 3)

In my opinion, here the realistic notion of "verisimilitude" as "the achievement of an illusion of reality in the audience" (Abrams, 1971, p. 211) has been problematized. In postmodernist fiction, the deconstructive aspect of narrative makes it possible for the reader, to read between the lines and to be notified of what Lennard Davis, as quoted by Hutcheon:

Novels do not depict life; they depict life as it is represented by ideology'. Ideology – how a culture represents itself to itself- 'doxifies' or naturalizes narrative representation, making it appear as natural or commen-sensical .(74)

In this novel, the interesting point is that the postmodern techniques themselves are expressed through the Tralfamadorian novels. The following excerpt would be more telling:

There are no telegrams on Tralfamadore… we Tralfamadorians read them all at once, not one after the other. There isn't any particular relationship between all the messages, except that the author has chosen them carefully, so that, when seen all at once, they produce an image of life that is beautiful and surprising and deep. There is no beginning, no middle, no end, no suspense no moral, no causes, no effects. What we love in our books are the depth of many marvelous moments seen all at one time. (2005, p. 88)

Here, two important points concerning postmodernist narrative have been metfictionally implied. The first point is the role of "simultaneity" (McHale, 1983, p.190) or reading everything at once through the four-dimensional outlook of Tralfamadorians. And the second point is the postmodernist non-linear outlook of plot.

The narrator also points to another aspect of postmodernism which can be the result of its antitotalizing manner in a metafictional manner:

There are almost no characters in this story, and almost no dramatic confrontations, because most of the people in it are so sick and so much the listless playthings of enormous forces. One of the main effects of war, after all, is that people are discouraged from being characters.(p. 164)

Accordingly, characters are fragmented and can not be read according to the traditional narrative techniques; they even defy modernist characterization; an important point is that "there is nothing intelligent to say about a massacre" (p.19) and the novel is doomed to be a "failure" (p. 22). So the narrative consciously portrays all these strategies to instigate the readers in problematizing all the so-called authentic concepts at the same.

IV. Conclusion

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In kurt Vonnegut's *Slaughterhouse-Five*, the ontological dimension is quite artistically foregrounded .The use of fictionalized world of Vonnegut and Tralfamadore as an imaginary world at the same time is a good example of what we have been thinking about as Earthlings We also encounter the outlook of the novel which is not epistemologically justified in the eyes of ordinary people.

Stream of narration which can be the counterpart of modernist stream of consciousness defies any narrative regulation and clearly puts the concept of narration into question .It points to the fact that narratives are ideologically constructed ,and as Hutcheon has repeatedly emphasized the norms and authority are shown to be arbitrary .Therefore, the concept of denaturalization is brought up in this regard .Consequently ,stream of consciousness as proposed by modernism can not be objectively rendered through ideological narratives.

Fragmentation reflects the anxious, schizophrenic situation of Billy Pilgrim in the novel. It also reflects the way postmodernists regard life. They believe that mental fragmentation defies ideological narratives; even in modernism, individualism itself is made out of a dominant ideology which is deconstructively demystified through the postmodernist fragmented narratives.

Parody, as was pointed out before, "prolematizes the concept of originality'' (Hutcheon, 1988, p.23) in postmodernism while the modernists regarded their literary works as original and noble .Parody is redefined as a literary device which deconstructs our belief in a unified literary system.

The concept of metafictionality self-consciously portrays the postmodernist view of narrative as human construction. It unravels the issue through using and abusing (ibid) realistic and even modernist narrative techniques to give us the opportunity to problematize the ideologically naturalized literary concepts. This aspect of postmodernism triggers the ontological dimension of literature as foregrounded in the intellectuality of the readers.

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The Integration of Peace Education in Reading Comprehension Lessons in Primary Schools

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***Abstract*—The paper examines the role of Peace Education in the primary School Curriculum. It also looks at the goals and tenets of Peace Education that can be integrated into the reading comprehension lessons in primary schools. The paper raised some challenges that English Language teachers may face in teaching some of the tenets of peace education and suggests possible ways of overcoming these challenges. The paper concluded with the need for English Language teachers to be more child-centred, innovative and creative in their teaching approach for more meaningful learning in order to achieve the desired results. The paper also suggests the need for curriculum Planners to include tenets of peace education in the list of titles for prose and poetry in primary school curriculum.**

***Index Terms*—integration, peace, education, reading, comprehension, primary, school**

I. Introduction

Peace Education to many Scholars such as Burns &Aspeslaugh (2002), Bar-Tal (2002), Adams (2000), Harris &Marrison (2003), Odejobi &Adesina (2009) is essentially about understanding the nature of conflict at various levels from personal to global, studying the causes of war and human aggression, exploring a range of awareness of the rights and responsibilities of individuals and groups in the world.

Since the 20th century, peace education programme around the world have represented a spectrum of focal themes. In Japan for instance, peace education targets issues of nuclear disarmament, militarism, in Australia, peace education focuses on challenging ethnocentrism, cultural diversity; in the United States, peace education is concerned about prejudice, violence and environmental issues, while in Africa, the focus is on hunger, poverty and starvation. Today, there is a great concern about the issue of peace world wide due to its continuous and constant threat to human existence. Education appears to be the means to move the world from a culture of violence to a culture of peace and tranquillity.

A. Purpose of the Study

This position paper is specifically aimed at discussing the various ways peace education tenets can be integrated into reading comprehension lessons in primary schools. The paper is also aimed at highlighting some of the challenges that English Language teachers may face in teaching the tenets of peace education.

B. Definitions of Peace Education

From the general view point, peace education is the process of acquiring values, knowledge, attitudes, skills and behaviours necessary to live in harmony with oneself, others and the natural environment.

Harris and Synoth (2002) describe peace education as a series of teaching encounters that draw from people their desire for peace, non-violent alternatives for managing conflicts and skills for critical analysis of structural arrangements that produce and legitimize injustice and inequality.

Ajala (2003) defines peace education as the type of education that impacts in learners all norms, values and attitudes that can bring about a conducive environment for human living.

Peace Education aims to help students acquire skills for non-violent conflict resolution and to reinforce these skills for active and responsible action in the society for the promotion of the values of peace.

Adejobi and Adesina (2009) viewed Peace Education as a type of study that essentially inculcates discipline in people. It is that course of study that teaches people the past and present causes of conflict or wars noting the effects, and recommending ways of averting such social ills.

According to Oyebamiji (2001), Peace Education is the type of education that is meant to promote a set of values, attitudes, traditions, mode of behaviour and ways of life based on respect for life, promotion of non-violence through education, dialogue and cooperation, promotion of all human rights and fundamental freedom.

Ajala (2003) defines it as the type of education that impacts in learners all norms, values and attitudes that could bring about a conducive environment for human living.

Peace Education in my own view, is a process where people learn forms of creating a culture of peace, analyse the causes of violence and learn values and skills that are congruent with peaceful behaviour. Peace Education is the gateway that takes people to various avenues of learning to appreciate individual differences, but honestly and sincerely

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addressing, the imbalances. Accepting that other people have different ways of looking at the world and empathizing with such views, even, when they are contrary to one's own. Peace Education is actually a call for an inclusive approach to mutual co-existence and a holistic way of living. A holistic way of living implies to live in peace with others and with the environment in all perspectives. Peace Education is, indeed, the only available way to create a more peaceful world. It is the starting point from which one can work to change individual and societal thinking in order to give up violent approaches.

C. Goals of Peace Education

The common general goals of Peace Education, among others, according to Harris & Synoth (2002) include the following.

To teach peace as a process

To foster change in order to make the world a better and more humane place; and to understand violent behaviour.

To diminish and or eradicate human ills ranging from injustice, inequality, prejudice intolerance abuse of human rights, environmental destruction, violent conflict etc to create a World of justice and peace, where all forms of fears will be relegated.

To mobilize pupils and teachers to take part in a campaign for change as a way of appreciating the riches of the concept of peace.

To promote the development and implementation of conflict resolution and peace making programmes for people of all ages equipping them with resources and skills that encourages values of constructive conflict resolution and peace making.

To investigate different concepts and examples of peace on a variety of levels from the personal to the entire globe.

To develop an understanding of peace in a state of being and as a process characterized by an absence of direct violence and presence of well-being and just relationships in the economic, socio-political and ecological spheres of life

To cultivate on people attitudes and values which will enable them to contribute towards some form of change, and to create skills enabling people to be able to utilize reflective thinking, through which they deepen their understanding of themselves and their connectedness to the lives of others.

To explore peace both as a state of being and as an active process for the promotion of a positive human relations.

To examine obstacles to peace at an individual, group, institutional and societal level; and to build self-esteem through constructive and non-hostile peer relationships.

D. Importance of Peace Education

The aim of Peace Education is to engender a commitment among people to a vision of structural peace in which all personal freedoms are legally protected from violence, oppression and indignity. To drive this to pupils, tenets of peace such as compassion, justice, fairness, objectivity, fair play, Love, kindness, peace, among others should be embedded in the reading comprehension passages. These, plus other activities combined with aspect of conflict resolutions, along with training in non-violent action(s) put the pupil (child) in the right-frame of mind. Peace education is about empowering people with skills, attitudes and knowledge to:

- build, maintain, and restore relationships at all levels of human interaction.
- develop positive approaches towards dealing with conflicts from the personal to the international.
- create safe environments, both physically and emotionally, that nurture each individual.
- create a safe world based on justice and human rights.
- build a sustainable environment and protect it from exploitation and war.

Peace education is based on a philosophy that teaches nonviolence, love, compassion, trust, fairness, cooperation and reverence for the human family and all life in planet. Peace education leads to peaceful living.

II. The Language Teachers' Role in Peace Education

The following are some of the ways language teachers can function as peace educators.

* The language teacher must understand that multi-cultural multi-ethnic and multi-religious problems in society, are not to be dealt with in isolation or in bits and pieces but integrated in meaningful reading comprehension passages that can assist pupils to develop a culture of peace. Such titles as compassion, living in harmony, love, kindness and service to others, can help solve conflicts of tribal, religious, or other prejudices.

* The language teacher must be cognizant and wholly supportive of the basic nature and aims of peace education. He/she must believe in the education that actualizes people's potentialities, in helping them learn how to make peace with themselves and with others, to live in harmony and unity with self, human kind and nature. The achievement of a unified, peaceful society both globally and within the nation, where citizenship is fostered and "unity in diversity" is recognized and practiced can be made manifest by the commitment of the language teacher to the basic aims of peace education.

* The language teacher should constantly keep in mind that the attainment of the goals of peace education is conditioned upon knowledge, volition and action. Unless these three are forthcoming, nothing will be accomplished. To this end, the language teacher must use his/her initiatives, volition and willpower to develop qualities such as tolerance,

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respect and appreciation of others, being fair and open minded, being able to consider other points of view, and looking beyond his/her own self interest. In other words, the language teacher must be sincerely free of any form of prejudice.

When a language teacher becomes deeply and regularly involved in teaching the tenets of peace education in reading comprehension lessons, this can cause him/her (the teacher) to take a long, deep look at his values or beliefs. Clearly, it can center a person on one's own thoughts, vows, and deeds. In order to be a good role model to pupils, the teacher has the opportunity of transformation and change of the inner self. Then the pupils can be helped to feel and understand who a peaceful person is, who a peace maker is etc and then the teacher will have a powerful, positive influence on hundreds and thousands of children, and youths.

A. Challenges of Language Teachers in Implementing Tenets of Peace Education in Reading Comprehension Lessons and Possible Solutions

- Lack of creativity

A language teacher should be creative especially in the reading comprehension aspect of language study. This is because children are bored when a subject, topic lacks the creativity to keep them aptly attentive. When the comprehension text lacks these attributes, the responsibility then falls on the teacher who should inject intriguing tit-bits momentarily, and make the comprehension lesson enjoyable. For instance, a comprehension lesson titled "kindness" should include some practical examples of individuals demonstrating kindness to one another. Children should be made to dramatise the virtue of kindness as contained in the passage. When a teacher falls short of these expectations, the goal of reading comprehension with tenets of peace education is defeated.

- Poor command of English Language

Many Nigerian primary school teachers are not competent to teach effectively in English language. For example, Gamut's (1985) cited in Yusuf (2010) survey of English Language teaching conditions revealed 74% out of the 70 teachers studied could teach more effectively in Nigerian Language than they could in English Language. This type of situation compounds pupil's problem of acquiring English as a second language. Teachers should make conscious efforts to improve their level of competence in English Language by going for further training. They should also attend regular workshops, conferences and seminars.

- Time

Time here is related to portion of time belonging to particular events or situation, and this applies to the classroom situation. On one part, the teacher has a lot to do within so short a time. He marks assignments, teaches, goes round to correct erring ones, attends to special pupils – slow writers, sluggish learners etc. By the time, it is time for reading comprehension lessons, an aspect that does not only enhance pupils' language proficiency but also exposes them to basic and pertinent peace virtues, he (the teacher) is already worn out.

This affects the learner too. Teachers should create time for children to relax in between lessons. Teachers should also adopt effective time management skills that will help them accomplish their task successfully.

- Unavailability of "peace" related titles in reading comprehension passages.

In most primary English text books, comprehension passages are titled differently. Such titles include Air travel; Birthday parties, Train journey, visit to the zoo etc. There are hardly any titles with tenets of peace education.

It is recommended that comprehension passages should include peace tenets such as "kindness", "love", "peace", "respect" and "dignity", among others. When children, from early age learn how to live peacefully, they will abide by it for the rest of their lives, and the society will be a more peaceful place to live in.

- Poor teaching methods

Most English language teachers do not have the knowledge of the appropriate method/technique to use in teaching children reading comprehension (Yusuf 2009). Reading comprehension lessons can always be meaningful if teachers encourage and stimulate students to always make use of their relevant schema (i.e background knowledge/experience) to make and confirm predictions as they read the reading comprehension texts. Meaning does not always reside in the text. The reader has to activate his/her schema to make meaning out of print. The language teacher needs to guide children to achieve this by using interactive activities, active participation and collaboration and co-operative teaching/learning techniques. Teachers should use dramatization, miming, demonstration, pair reading, group work and interactive question and answer sessions. Teachers should encourage pupils to perform different activities before, during and after reading to enhance language proficiency.

- Lack of reading specialist teachers

In most primary schools, there are no specialist reading teachers. The English Language teacher assumes a dual role i.e as a language teacher and a reading teacher. Since the language teacher is not trained specially as a reading teacher, he/she is often found battling and trying to cope with the challenges in the classroom. In view of the fact that no education programme can rise above the quality of its teachers, the teacher factor becomes a critical one in the implementation of the tenets of peace education and the improvement of reading efficiency. More effort is needed to raise their level of competence. Language teachers lack training in peace education. Peace education tenets should be taught in teacher training colleges/colleges of education/universities.

- Lack of orientation/training

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Teachers lack training in peace education. Peace education tenets should be included in the teacher training curriculum. Regular workshops/orientation courses should be mounted for teachers to acquaint them with the latest and update information in the profession. Teachers should be encouraged to belong to professional Associations in Peace and conflict resolutions and Reading Associations such as RAN. They should also seek to update their classroom pedagogy through reading journals and attending relevant conferences.

- Lack of adequate teaching facilities

Most school lack adequate teaching facilities/materials for teaching. This tends to hamper or incapacitate teachers. Facilities/teaching materials such as overhead projectors, television set, DVD players, VCD players, tape recorders, pictures, posters, etc. should be provided in adequate quantities for teachers. Jingles on peace education, songs on peace education and drama or playlets on peace education need to be provided by schools/teachers to make learning more meaningful and interesting.

B. Integrating the Tenets of Peace Education in Reading Comprehension Lessons in Primary Schools

English language is a subject that is taught everyday on the timetable. Reading comprehension is one of the fundamental language skills children are expected to be exposed to all through their schooling. In view of this, young children need to be constantly inspired through meaningful reading comprehension lessons, to have a positive mental attitude, because their attitude will determine their altitude ultimately in life. No one needs to carry out any research to know that from infancy to this level of education, every child is supposed to know that aeroplanes fly in the air, ships ply the water ways, cars and trains on road and rails respectively. Unfortunately, most comprehension passages in pupils texts from primary 1 – 6 are seen talking about those experiences. It is high time we made a u-turn. Now is the time to make children agents of peace. Children should read more about mutual co-existence, religious tolerance, respect for one another, good neighbourliness, love, caring and sharing, compassion, forgiveness, loyalty, piety, kindness, honesty, optimism, peace etc.

Children should be taught that a smiling face will win more friends than a frowning one. They equally need to know that whatever the human mind can conceive and believe, it can achieve. Therefore, they should be taught positive things about the world. They should be encouraged to conceive and believe that the world is a peaceful one. These virtues will help them to grow to become peace loving good citizens who will always dare to be the change they want to see in the world.

Samples of some reading comprehension passages developed by this researcher containing tenets of peace education are included in the appendix of this paper. Below is a demonstration lesson with one of such samples.

III. A Sample Lesson Guide (for Primary 4-6)

Living in peace

Tunji often takes advantage of his size and picks on smaller kids. Without the slightest offence from his classmates, he pounces on one. He does this with pride. The children now live in fear. He eats their food, collects their money and other valuables, and the children are afraid to report for fear of repraisal attack. But Uche was a kid with guts. Small and a constant victim of his brutality, Uche decided he will do something. He quietly orchestrated a plan with David. They called all the children in the class together and told them that the only way to deal with this kind of person is not to be annoyed. That, they should come to school and keep their food with another teacher in another class. Give him all their money to keep, then at break time, they will go there one after the other to eat and buy whatever they want in the canteen other than the place he usually sits to attack them. Uche did even more.

The next day, he went to their head teacher and reported him. The teacher came to the class with six other bigger boys. By their size, you could tell they are stronger than Tunji. So, whenever he tries to bully a younger or smaller kid, other big boys will stop him. After one week, Tunji changed, knowing fully well that if he ever tries something out, he will be dealt with severely by this six big boys.

The entire children became friends with the new boys while Tunji became an outcast. One day, he stood up in class and apologized to them all. He told them that what he felt now is really bad. That he now realized how bad the kids were feeling in his days of brutality. Till this day, the children live happily and in peace.

Answer the following questions

1. Why did the children live in fear?
2. Why is it that it is only Uche that went to report?
3. Why did the teacher bring six more boys to Uche's class.
4. How did Tunji learn his lesson?
5. What lessons could be derived from the passage?
6. Do you consider Tunji's acts of bullying as good or bad? Give reasons for your answer.

Introduction

Teacher should introduce the passage above by asking some pre-reading questions such as

a) what does it mean to live in peace?
b) Why do we need to live in peace?
c) What are the benefits of living in peace with our classmates, schoolmates and neighbours?

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d) What does the title of the passage suggest?

Presentation:

Step 1 Teacher should stimulate meaningful discussion on the passage through the above questions.

Step 2 Teacher should read the first sentence and ask the pupils what they think the passage is about.

Step 3 Teacher should read the first paragraph together with the pupils to confirm their predictions.

Step 4 Teacher should read the first sentence of the second paragraph and ask the pupils why "the teacher decided to come to the class with six bigger boys"

Step 5 Teacher should read the second paragraph with the pupils to confirm their predictions.

Step 6 Teacher should read the first sentence of the last paragraph and ask the pupils "why the entire class became friends with the new boys and Tunji became an outcast".

Step 7 Teacher should make pupils demonstrate and act a short playlet on the content of the passage.

Step 8 Teacher should discuss answers to the comprehension questions.

Evaluation: Teacher should discuss ways of making peace and what pupils can do to live in peace with one another. In addition, pupils should answer the questions after the comprehension passage.

Conclusion: Teacher should give pupils homework to list ways they can make or live in peace with their classmates.

IV. Recommendations and the Way Forward

- Orientation/training courses should be mounted for language teachers with emphasis on teaching the tenets/values of peace education.
- Language teachers need to be trained before they are allowed to teach in schools. The training should reach the university teaching staff as it is the base where reconstruction of ideas along this line is most viable.
- Curriculum planners should suggest activities that language teachers can expose their children to in order to achieve some of the peace education goals.
- Schools should be well equipped with adequate teaching facilities for effective and meaningful learning.
- Symposia, conferences, debates, seminars, talks and displays of instances of war and outcomes of peace should be encouraged in the teaching profession.
- Children need to be trained and encouraged to be part of the national peace building network where they can make meaningful contributions and become part of the solutions themselves. Now is the time to make children agents of peace.
- English language teachers should create the awareness through relevant reading comprehension passages that peace education is not just a concept that needs to be grasped but it is actually a vision, mission and a way of life which requires commitment on their part.
- English language teachers should be more child-centred, innovative and creative in their teaching approach for more meaningful learning in order to achieve the desired results.
- Curriculum planners should ensure that the tenets of peace education such as kindness, loyalty, honesty, love, optimism, compassion, peace etc are included in the titles for prose and poetry in the primary school curriculum.

V. Conclusion

The "seed" for building a culture of peace in Nigeria and in the world at large are the young children in primary schools, scattered all over the country/world, who through the integration of the tenets of peace education in their reading comprehension lessons, can have a good solid foundation upon which the nation/world can boast of a lasting culture of peace and tranquillity.

It is often said that if one wants to build a house, one should start with the foundation. The primary school in this regard, is the foundation and bedrock upon which other levels of education are built. In view of this, it is important for peace education to be introduced in the primary school curriculum to shape the personality, character and ethics of children at this level of education. Reading comprehension lessons should be the starting point. Curriculum planners and English Language text book writers should ensure that the tenets of peace education which aims at information, formation and transformation are integrated into reading comprehension passages to develop pupils to their fullest potentials.

Appendices Samples of Reading Comprehension Passages with Tenets of Peace Developed by this Researcher

Appendix 1

Selflessness

Tobi looked worried after school. They were asked to buy a sketch pad for the fine Art class the next day, and the teacher made it clear that if anyone doesn't have, he/she will stay outside as long as the subject lasted. Tobi thought

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what to do; for his parents are away to Port-Harcourt. His uncle living across the street said he hadn't any ₦350.oo to spare. The only option left was to go ask his friend Emeka living in the street opposite theirs.

He walked to his house but Emeka told him that the only money he has is ₦120. Tobi wondered how he was going to manufacture an additional ₦230.00. It was getting dark, so he walked home with mixed feelings, tears began to form in his eyes. Just as he was about to cross the road to his house, he saw a black wallet lying by the road side". Could this God answering my prayers?" he wondered. He looked behind, sideways, and ahead. Nobody was near. So, he picked it up.

First, he admired it. Then he opened it. "Money!:" he exclaimed. Looking at the pile of bills neatly arranged, he knew it was much money. He concluded he was going to count it when he got home. As he got home, he ran to his room and locked himself in his room. "One, two, three," he counted. The money was ₦12,450.00. He was happy he found money at last to buy not only the sketch pad but other things. He looked out of the window and saw an old man asking people something. He thought the man maybe lost. So, he went out to help. "Hello grandpa, are you ok?", he inquired. "No little man. I think I just lost my wallet. Did you find anyone around here please?".

Tobi thought whether to return the wallet, and that means not buying the sketch pad. "The wallet did belong to this old man", he thought again. "Here grandpa", he said handing him the wallet. "Is it this? "I picked it few minutes ago". The old man's face was very wrinkled but his expression was quite graceful. "Thank you my boy", the old man said. As Tobi was walking away toward his house, the old man called out. "My dear boy", and Tobi stopped. He gave him ₦450 for his kindness, sincerity and selflessness.

Answer the following questions

If you were in Tobi's shoes, what would you have done?

a) Hold on to the wallet and spend the money on valuables?
b) Do as he had done: return the wallet to the deserving owner?
c) Go right ahead and remove ₦350.00 for your sketch pad and leave the rest money on the side walk?
d) Would you have requested for money from the old man or test his sense of discretion as shown?
e) Go show your uncle that you have got money after all?

APPENDIX 2

Ada, the little child of peace

Little Ada and her mother spent Saturday afternoon cleaning out the kitchen. The mother took it upon herself to explain the function of each equipment to young Ada. She was intrigued. She tries putting to work some of the equipment: the electric and gas cookers, switch on the gas cylinder and off; set the light/flame to the acceptable mode; switch between electric current and gas freely without making mistakes; try toast some bread; blend some juice; manage the kitchen. She was grateful to her mother for everything. Indeed, she confessed it was her best moment spent in the home and with her mother ever. As the job wears them down, they sat at a stool and ate some of the food little Ada just prepared "if you continue like this my darling daughter, you will be one of the greatest chefs Nigeria will produce", her mother said.

She studied her mother closely and saw tears forming in her eyes. "Mummy! Are you ok!", she asked. Her mother nodded on the affirmative. She came down from her stool, with some tissue paper together and handed it to her. "You are the best mum in the world and you are very beautiful", she said. "Is it daddy?"

For some time now, Ada had noticed that her father seldom come home early, and when he comes, he goes straight to bed. They don't eat together anymore. No more movies. He no longer helps her to do her homework or ask her who offended her in school. Little Ada knew that that is what is making mother to sob. She left the kitchen in a hurry. She went straight to daddy's room. This time her father was awake, with the Saturday paper in his hand. "Good morning daddy", she greeted. Her father invited her for a hug but she declined. He made to catch her but she ducked. He finally grabbed her but she wriggled out of his hold. "Leave me alone," she yelled.

"Ok princess, what is it this time" her father asked. "You don't seem to love mummy anymore. She is crying in the kitchen. Now go and talk to her". He looked at his daughter and thought for a moment." My daughter just four years, saying this? Her mother must have gotten into her head."

"Alright little mum, I will go talk to her later" "No dad. Right now" she replied. Her father stood up although reluctantly and strolled through to the kitchen. He grabbed his car keys in a way that Ada didn't notice. The next thing she heard was a car engine buzzing. She rushed outside and saw her father driving off. In less than ten minutes he was back. She could see very beautiful flowers at the back of the car. "Where is mummy?" "In her room, upstairs". He walked through the stairs to his wive's room, little Ada following behind. He knocked at the door. "Mum, open the door", she cried. When the mother heard her, she opened the door. She was not pleased with Ada because she was with her father. "What is this Ada?" she asked. "Dad, say something", Ada said.

Her dad gave her the flowers and said he was really sorry for everything. That he never thought of doing anything to hurt her but Ada's mum rejected it. "Mum, please. Dad said he is sorry for everything", Ada pleaded on her father's behalf.

Together, they embraced and from then on, peace reigned supreme in their house, thanks, however, to little Ada.

Answer the questions

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1. What drove Ada to make her father apologize to her mother.
2. Do you think she is rude to her father?
3. Why do you think Ada wanted her father to make peace with her mother.
4. What would you have done if you were in Ada's shoes?
5. Why is it always good to make peace in the home?
6. What is the overall lesson learnt from this passage?

APPENDIX 3

Responsibility

After a tough week at school, Adamu is looking forward to the weekend. He comes home, drops his books on his table and lets out a long sigh: the joy of doing absolutely nothing. Sleeping, watching TV, some football games/matches, visit friends, and try out one of his video games he just acquired.

After supper that night, his father called him to his room. "I am travelling to Lagos tomorrow. There are people coming to the office tomorrow. You have to go stay there from around ten 0'clock till 4pm, and please as they come, deliver these envelopes to them one on one. Sorry for the pains"

Adamu knew what that meant… sitting still, concentrating, no watching his favourite team play. He moans inside. This isn't exactly what he had in mind for the weekend.

Answer the questions

1. Should Adamu pretend to be ill?
2. Should he suggest to the father to send for his friend or one of his staff?
3. Why do you think his father chose him and not anyone else?
4. What lesson can be derived from the passage?

APPENDIX 4

Making up after a disagreement

Amira and her friends – Chioma, Ada and Kemi love to tell stories of how their weekend went during break on Mondays. Maryam came to join them but they all kept mute. She noticed the quietness resultant of her coming to join them and she left. Earlier, Maryam told Amira's mother that she is too playful. A feat that has led her to be grounded. Meanwhile, Maryam seem to be the most intelligent and studious.

Two days later, a test was to be held by the maths teacher. Amira sat next to Maryam as they usually do. She bit her biro all the while the test lasted as she doesn't seem to know anything. Maryam felt pity for her. She knew that if she told her how to factorise one of the equations, she may be able to do rest. She told Amira the formula to question one, and she was glad. Before she could notice, Maryam was gone, but she was grateful to her for the gesture. She was able to do similar exercises. After the test, she walked up to her and knelt down before her. "I am sorry for the embarrassment the other day. I have come to realize that you are a friend indeed. Please, let us be friends again". Maryam pulled her up to an embrace, while Ada, Chioma and other friends looked on, happy again that she is in their friendship list again.

Answer the questions

1. What prompted Maryam to help Amira?
2. Why was Amira annoyed with Maryam?
3. Why was Maryam grounded?
4. What lessons can you learn from Amira and Maryam?

APPENDIX 5

Let us live in peace

Where the rivers of time
Are foul by native stress and strife,
And man becomes his own enemy,
Life is distraught
And its colourful scenes
Are mared and stained
By dark brown blots of violent blood.
Let us live in peace,
For here, like tenants in thatched huts, we dwell.
Soon, too soon, the tropic storm will out-blow the flickering heights of human life.
Our huts will fall.
In frailty upon the earth
Whereon, they rot,
And we in foul disintegration,

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Will be identified – with dust.

Answer the questions

1. Why is it necessary to live in peace?
(a) because the world should be peaceful
(b) soon, too soon, the tropic storm will out-blow the flickering heights of human life
(c) one day we will all die
(d) man is created to live in peace with one another
(e) all of the above
2. Explain the meaning of the sentence – "… let us live in peace, for here like tenants in thatched huts we dwell".
3. Give 5 reasons why we should live in peace.

APPENDIX 6

Love

Aisha can't believe that John is in her class again this session. Last session, John, made popular by his football skills, decided, for whatever reason, that Aisha would be his target. John continually made derogatory and demeaning remarks about her. Fortunately, not all the girls around thought John is as good, so Aisha had some people to turn to; the people John has attacked at one time or another. She thought that maybe this year would be different, but she was yet afraid.

John was delighted to see her "favourite" target back in class. Aisha had vowed not to cross paths with John this term and session. To worsen matters, Aisha's teacher had assigned them to the same science group for the laboratory, and the snag is that you dare not interswitch groups. The consequences are huge. Not prepared for such, she stayed in her group – with John.

Today is their first day at the lab, and as glad as Aisha thought she is, John is absent. She concentrated, and other girls too. She however didn't give much to it until her phone rang after school. Before this time, she had learned that John has an appointment with his optician.

Much to her amazement, it is John on the phone. He wanted to know if he can come and get the lab notes from her. Aisha was dumbstruck. "John! Calling me for help!"

Answer the questions

1. Should she scream at him to forget it?
2. Would you suggest she give him the wrong notes instead?
3. Agree to give him the notes if he will promise to quit bothering her?
4. Tell him it will cost him ₦500.00 or more?
5. Name the lessons derived from the passage.

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On Over-compensation and Principles of Linguistic Humor E-C Translation

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***Abstract*—Skopos theory and Translation Variation Theory have entitled Chinese translators to deal with linguistic humor translation in a broader framework and approach it with compensation translation. However, some translators' views exceed the limits and over-compensation happens, leading to a new serious problem. Therefore, this paper puts forward two principles about linguistic humor translation to prevent translation from turning into creation.**

***Index Terms*—over-compensation, principle, creation**

I. Introduction

English linguistic humor is the rhetoric device-dependent humor. It makes best use of homophonic words or phrases, polyphones, polysemants, homographs, perfect homonyms and full homonyms to create pun, zeugma, malapropism, mondegreen, hypallage, parody, spoonerism and so on in order to achieve humorous effect. Linguistic features in English linguistic humor are thought to be impossible to be duplicated in Chinese because English and Chinese belong to different language families. For example, "Better late than the late". Besides being an imitation of the well-known western saying "Better late than never", this joke also contains a polysemant "late", which means both "not on time" and "someone who is dead". The phonetic feature coupled with semantic ones causes great difficulties for translators.

With the change of people's translation ideology and the emergence of new theories, Chinese researchers have succeeded in putting forward some new methods, such as compensation translation, to translate English linguistic humor. However, over-compensation happens too and leads to new problems. The solution to this new problem is badly needed now.

II. Translatability of Linguistic Humor in Untranslatability

This is an era when new theories keep emerging, so linguistic humor translation is put into a broader framework now and its criteria have been re-oriented. Skopos theory by Christiane Nord and Translation Variation Theory by Chinese researcher Huang Zhonglian give us strong theoretical support to deal with the issue from new aspects. Skopos theory views translation from a more functional and sociocultural oriented approach. It stresses the purpose of translation and allows the possibility of the same source text being translated in different ways. Translation Variation Theory legalizes translation variants, stating that complete translation is not the exclusive part of translation; translation variants and shifting devices like rewriting are integral components as well.

In addition to the new theories, inspirational thinking makes its contributions to linguistic humor E-C translation,too. Translators can refine their knowledge and experience by keeping an observant eye on bilingual and bi-dialectal renderings that take place in their daily life and remaining alert to naming and renaming practices in intra-lingual and inter-lingual communications. Creative mind converts the "untranslatable" into "translatable".

So English linguistic humor becomes accessible in some sense by compensation translation.

To make a clear classification of compensation is as hard as to give a comprehensive definition. It is classified into compensation in kind, compensation in place, compensation by merging and compensation by splitting by Hervey & Higgins and parallel compensation, contiguous compensation and displaced compensation by Harver(Chen, 2007); explicit compensation and implicit compensation by Ma Hongjun (Ma, 2003) and compensation by integration, compensation by isolation, compensation with the same device, compensation with a different device, compensation in a parallel location and compensation in a displaced location, synchronous compensation and compensation in difference by Xia Tingde(Xia, 2006). This paper classifies compensation into three main categories: compensation for the phonological loss, compensation for the semantic loss and compensation for the syntactic loss. Under these three categories are four strategies: annotation, substitution, recontextualization and splitting.

A. Annotation

Annotation in linguistic humor translation usually takes the form of literal translation with footnotes or endnotes, which is meant to introduce the relevant knowledge of the source text (i.e. ST) to the target text (i.e. TT) readers so that

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the TT readers can sense the humor. For example: A dead leaf fell in Soapy's lap. That was *Jack Frost's* card. (from *The Cop and the Anthem* by *O Henry*)

Translation: 一片枯叶飘落到苏贝的膝头。那是*杰克·弗罗斯特*的名片。

译注：杰克 弗罗斯特，原文是 Jack Frost,是英文里对"寒霜"的拟人称呼。

Any native speaker will easily feel the sense of humor the moment he comes to the part of "*Jack Frost's card*", because "***f****rost*", the ice crystals covering the ground when the temperature outside falls below freezing point, is converted into "***F****rost*", a person's surname. But to gain the same humorous effect in the Chinese translation, it is far more than the matter of a slight change from the small letter "f" into the big one, because Chinese is not an alphabetic language. If the translator simply uses transliteration and translate "***F****rost*" as a person's name, he would get the version "*杰克·弗罗斯特* " and definitely lose the connotative meaning of the word. But if he gives priority to the implied meaning (i.e. being cold), he would be criticized as unfaithful to the original. So annotation is a compromise in this situation.

B. Substitution

This method is especially effective in dealing with pun in English linguistic humor. When proper names, culture-loaded terms or wordplay cannot be literally translated into the target language, translators often replace these elements with functionally equivalent ones. Although replacement destroys the linguistic properties of the original, it can preserve the contextual effects quite well and sometimes can make up for the lost beauty. It is the optimum seeking-method to effectively improve the readability of translation. For example: Better late than the late. The word "*late*" has two meanings: "not on time for something" and "someone who is dead". So the rhetorical device in the ST is antalaclasis. We cannot find a Chinese polysemant that happens to have the same meaning as the word "late". So the translator forms a paronomasia, *晚了*总比*完了*好, with the similar pronunciation in it , which functions well in bringing the same humorous effect to the readers of the TT.

C. Recontextualization

Recontextualization applies to the situation that an original context (including features of the language) may play such an essential part in the perlocution that no degree of exegesis or marking combined will achieve the desired effects (Hickey, 2001). For example: Romeo: What have thou found? Mercutio: No *hare*, sir.

The cultural background knowledge enables the ST readers to sense the humor embodied in the word "*hare*", because the image of a hare reminds them of a prostitute. But when "*hare*" is translated into Chinese "*野兔*" as it means, it will lose the cultural connotation and bring no humorous effect among the TT readers at all. So the translator borrows a new image in Chinese culture "野鸡", which has the same connotative meaning to the Chinese people as "hare" to those who speak English and translate the humor into 罗:你发现了什么？ 墨:倒不是野*鸡(妓)*. The part of the context is reset in the translation, but the meaning of the ST is loyally conveyed into Chinese without any loss of humorous flavor.

D. Splitting

Splitting can be applied when two meanings are embodied in one sentence. For example: A: What do lawyers do when they die? B: *Lie still*.

The humorous effect is in the sentence "*Lie still"* that has two meanings, "*to lie there quietly*" and "*still telling something untrue*". The translator splits these two meanings and translates them both into Chinese. The translation goes like this: 律师死了干啥?身子动弹不得，嘴上撒谎依旧.

It is easily seen from the above examples that compensation translation can work well if used in the right way. It serves as the best possible solution to the linguistic humor translation.

III. Over-compensation and Principles of Linguistic Humor E-C Translation

It's comforting to see that we have found new approaches to deal with linguistic humor E-C translation, but some translators' views exceed the limits, so there is a tendency that translation is turning into creation, which changes the essential attribute of translation and leads to self-denial (Zhao, 2005). Does the multiplicity of criteria lead to the result of no criteria? Is it true that the end justify the means? The answer is that there are always principles we should abide by to keep the balance between translation and creation.

Xia Tingde(2006) summarizes six principles of descriptive nature about compensation: principle of demand; principle of relation; principle of focus; principle of minimal distance; principle of the same function and principle of consistency. But these six principles are too general in the case of linguistic humor translation. Based on the Skopos theory and Translation Variation Theory, two principles are put forward in this paper, which are meant to prevent over-compensation from happening.

A. Principle of Necessity

"The basic principle of Skopos theory is 'The translation method is determined by the purpose of the target text'. This might be understood as 'The end justifies the means' and translators might want to override the source-text

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author's communicative intentions just to achieve the purpose defined by the client or to please the target audience. But translators are responsible for the effects their work may have for either the target audience or the source-text author or the client or even the translator as an individual."(Bian, 2006, p,45) This responsibility is what she calls "loyalty". It is an ethical concept limiting the otherwise unlimited range of possible purposes. So the first principle translators should keep in mind while doing linguistic humor English-Chinese translation is Principle of Necessity.

Principle of Necessity means translators shouldn't employ compensation strategies except on the occasion when there is no other way. Linguistic features block the way of using common translation methods so compensation is required. But compensation is needed only when it is necessary. The abuse of it only leads to wrong translation.

Let's study the translation of a dialogue in the movie *Jurassic Park*, which took place between a reptile expert and a little naïve boy who associated a blind dinosaur with a blind person and thought that the blind dinosaur must have a dog as the blind person has a guiding dog. The original transcript reads like this:

"What do you call a blind dinosaur?"

"I don't know. What do you call it?"

"What do you call a blind dinosaur's dog?"

"You got me."

The dialog is translated into:

"请问黑色的恐龙叫什么龙？"

"乌龙。"

"请问最有钱的恐龙叫什么龙？"

"猪笼（龙）"

This translation is taken as a good example of adaptation strategy by some researchers, who think that it brings the humor to the audience by domesticating the language and cultural associations (Qin, 2007). However, when reexamined carefully, its mistake is right there —— it violates the Principle of Necessity by using compensative solution when unnecessary. Adaptation proves useful in solving the problem, but if handled at will without any restriction it is no good at all.

In the above example the conversation sounds funny not because of the language the little boy used but because of the way he thought. He believed a blind dinosaur should have a dog guiding its way like a human being does. So he asked the scientist the second question how he called a blind dinosaur's dog after the first question about how to call a blind dinosaur. In the translation the translator changed the whole context in order to bring laughter, failing to realizing the same humorous effect can be easily achieved by using the same rhetorical device used in the ST instead of appealing to compensation translation. A modified translation goes like this:

"您怎么称呼一只*盲龙*啊？"

"不知道。你叫它什么？"

"那您又怎么称呼盲龙的狗呢？"

"你可难倒我了！"

"*A blind dragon*" is translated into "*盲龙* ", the mimic form of "*盲人*". By doing this, the author successfully keeps the translation loyal to the ST both in the terms of content and the humorous effect.

B. Principle of Minimum Compensation

When compensation is the only way to translate a humorous English text, the principle is that the fewer of compensated places there are and the fewer of compensation strategies we use, the better the translation would be. This is Principle of Minimum Compensation.

Translation criteria are growing multiple but it does not mean there shall be no criterion. It means we should tolerate the existence of many criteria and accept those reasonable ones. There is always a lowest level or the bottom line for translation practice to prevent the production of unqualified translations (Gao, 2007). Prof. Yang Zijian (2002) believes all the translations between the translation and creation make a set. The representation formula is like this: $T=\{t_1, t_2, t_3 \dots t_n\}W$, (T=translation, W=write). T_1 is the closest to the original and T_n is the closest to creation. It is rather difficult to locate the point where the translation ends and creation begins, however, where T_1 is is comparatively easier to be determined. So Principle of Minimum Compensation is both quite important and feasible. The analysis of the following translation is an illustration of how this principle will work.

The source text is: "When are you going to fix that front *fence*, Hiram?"asked the farmer's wife. "Oh, next week when Silas comes home from college." "But what will the boy know about fixing a fence, Hiram?" "He ought to know a heap. He wrote me that he'd been taking *fencing* lessons for a month."

"*Fence*" is the barrier between two areas of land while "*fencing*" is a sport in which two competitors fight each other using very thin sword. The phonetic connection between these two words creates humor in the ST and set a big obstacle for the translators.

A translation is like this:"海拉姆，你什么时候把*防盗网装上*？" 妻子问丈夫。"哦，下个星期吧。西拉斯从学校放假回来*上*。""一个孩子会*上*这个吗？""他懂多了！他不是写信告诉我天天都去*上网*吗？"

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The translator renders the TT understandable to its Chinese readers by translating the first "fence" into "防盗网" and second "fence" into "上网". However, he violates the Principle of Minimum Compensation. The centermost part of humor in the ST is about two tings/activities — fence(in Chinese it means "围栏") and fencing (in Chinese it means "击剑"), but the translator makes both of them disappear in the translation by translating them into other meanings, simply for the purpose of keeping the Chinese translations of these two words sharing one same Chinese character "*网*" so that they will be in correspondence with each other at the phonological level (i.e.×××网 and ×××网). In fact, the translator overdoes the compensation. The humorous effect is likely to be kept the same in the TT even when the original context is remained intact: "海拉姆，你什么时候把房前的*栅栏栏*好？" 妻子问丈夫。"哦，下个星期吧，等西拉斯从学校回来。" "一个孩子会*栏*什么？" "他懂多了！他写信告诉他们学*跨栏*都*栏*了一个月啦。" This is how Principle of Minimum Compensation functions. In the new translation, the meaning of the first "*fence*" is unchanged so recontextualization is done at the minimum degree.

Principle of Minimum Compensation also means that translators should respect the underlying formula in the SS and give priority to the rhetorical device(s) that is/are the same to the one(s) used in the source text if several rhetorical devices are available in translating process. In this sense, Principle of Minimum Compensation can also be named as Principle of Same Category Priority. Here is an example. The source text is: The professor rapped on his desk and shouted: "Gentleman, *order*!"The entire class yelled, "Beer!"

Translation 1:教授拍着桌子喊到： "你们这些年轻人*吆喝（要喝）*什么?"全班学生喊到： "啤酒!"

Translation 2: 教授在讲台上"笃笃笃"敲了几下喊道:"先生们,*请安静! — 你们叫什么*! ?"全班学生齐声嚷道:"啤酒!"

Translation 3:教授在讲台上"笃笃笃"敲了几下喊道:"同学们!安静*—（一个嗝）*—点吧!"全班学生齐声嚷道:"啤酒!"

An asteismus pun, a pun at the semantic level, is used in the source text to generate humor. The students misinterpret the word "*order*" deliberately to mess up the class, for "*order*" can either be used to tell people to stop causing a disturbance or be used by waiters/waitresses in restaurants to their customers to inquire what food they request. Two meanings are interwoven in a single word, which forms insurmountable difficulty in translation.

All the above three translations are successful in terms of transferring the pun from English to Chinese, but it is quite obvious that different rhetorical devices are used. Translation 1 replaces asteismus pun with paronomasia, a phonological pun. Translation 2 and 3 keep the humor at the semantic level, but neither of them keeps the whole underlying formula of the ST because Translation 2 adopts the splitting strategy and Translation 3 uses recontextualization.

Actually, we can easily get a better translation by simplifying Translations 2 into "…先生们, 你们*叫*什么!". The Chinese word "*叫* " in the translation functions the same way that the English word "*order*" does in the ST. On one hand, "叫" means "*yell 嚷* "; on the other hand, "*叫什么*" has the meaning of "what do you want to eat?". So translation keeps the underlying formula of the ST.

IV. Conclusion

Translation of linguistic humor is an art that requires the inspirational thinking. It seems that all the solutions to those so called "untranslatable" are the results of a sudden enlightenment after much brainstorming. However, the inspirational thinking works wonders only occasionally. It is the principle that functions well all the time. So when doing linguistic humor E-C translation, translators should not only make full use of their creative minds but also follow the principles that help them avoid over-compensation.

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Teaching as a Disciplined Act: A Grounded Theory

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***Abstract*—This study aimed to explore why language teaching in public high schools in Iran is so shallow and disconnected from scholarship. Interview data were collected and analysed through the grounded theory procedures. Iterative data collection and analysis yielded teaching as a disciplined act as the core category. Teachers do as they are told because binding directives and circulars specify a set of permissible acts. This set of acts is then naturalised as good practice through teaching teams, evaluation scheme and promotion criteria. Disciplined practice entails deskilling since teachers don't find a chance to use their professional knowledge and skills.**

***Index Terms*—disciplined act, grounded theory, disciplinary power, deskilling**

I. Introduction

The heyday of methods can be considered to have lasted until the late 1980s. Classes were observed to evaluate the degree to which teaching and learning activities were in line with a specific method. As Richards and Rodgers (2001) cogently state, good teaching was regarded as correct use of the method and its prescribed principles and techniques. Since good practice was defined as the degree of conformity with a given method, scholars of language teaching were on the lookout for the best method for three decades. But this endeavour proved futile. Along this line, Yalden (1987, p.17), contends, "despite discussion and experimentation for more than three decades, the language teaching profession has reached no conclusion as to which method is intrinsically best."

Disappointment with the 'method' concept led scholars of language teaching to rethink and focus on an alternative to methods. Following Dewey (1933) and Schon (1983) scholars of language teaching defined good practice as one that is reflective. That is, rather than prescribing a pre-fabricated procedure which involves an ordered progression from 'approach' to 'method' to teaching 'techniques' (Anthony, 1963), educators thought that language teaching profession would be better grounded if teachers were trusted to improve their practice through reflection. The notion that teachers should be reflective practitioners became widely accepted in teacher education circles in the 1980s and 1990s (Brookfield, 1995).

With its ever increasing acceptance in the educational circle reflective practice is now a paradigm that dominates teacher education around the world (Lee, 2007). Pre-service teacher education, in particular, has shifted its emphasis from a transmission-oriented to a constructivist approach, where teacher learners focus on what they know instead of what they do, bringing prior knowledge and personal experience to bear on the new learning situations (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2001). As such the syllabus requirement for reflective practice encourages greater self-reliance through questioning and reflection, and is suggestive of a socially-constructed view of learning that recognizes teaching as an essentially complex, interactive, and contingent activity (Brandt, 2008).

This paradigm shift was taken to be very promising for language teacher education. Following Schon's conception of teaching, Richards (1991) argued that bottom-up approaches, especially those based on teacher self-reflection, hold the most promise for developing effective teachers because they emphasise development, discovery, and inquiry rather than training in fixed methodologies. Similarly, Richards and Lockhart (1994) argued that reflective practice could better serve the profession than making teachers conform to an external model.

Thus from the early 1940s to date, scholars have been preaching two dominant conceptions of good teaching. From the heydays of the Audiolingual to the late 1980s, they defined good practice as conformity with a given method. From the early 1990s to date, good practice has been defined as being reflective in nature. Whereas in the methods era teachers were prescribed to ascribe to a certain method, they are now prescribed to improve their practice through reflection. This, however, is a difficult process, since it 'requires critical thought, self-direction, and problem solving coupled with personal knowledge and self-awareness' (Chant, Heafner, & Bennett, 2004, p. 25).

Moreover, reflection is contingent upon teachers' working conditions. "Under appropriate conditions self-reflection in reflective practice is a process of self-enhancement" (Yip, 2006, p.783). However, under inappropriate conditions such as oppressive and demanding teaching environments this conception of teaching loses its colour. Under such conditions, teachers' actions are directed by the particularities and exigencies of the society for which teachers teach rather than by their personal theories generated through reflection. In some contexts such as public high schools in Iran, observation of teachers' work indicates that the glorious rhetoric of teaching profession has yielded dismal practice in action since

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language teaching is often shallow, simplistic, and disconnected from authentic scholarship. Scholars believe that this educational ill can be cured if teachers critically reflect on their experience. For instance, Ruch (2000) believes that critical reflection transforms practice by challenging existing social, political and cultural conditions. But is this ever possible for powerless teachers in a conformist education system that is not conducive to change?

II. Purpose and Significance

This study aims to discover why language teaching in public high schools in Iran is so shallow, simplistic and disconnected from the glorious rhetoric of the day. To this end the researcher followed a data first mode of research by theorising from the professional life of experienced language teachers willing to share their experience with the researcher.

This work is significant because it gives voice to the oft-silenced group in education system. To this end, the study is conducted "with" not "on" teachers. Theorising from teachers' voice, the study explores why knowledge of the universal principles of language teaching and personal theories generated through reflection are not sufficient to improve practice. While universal principles and teacher-generated knowledge define the whole universe of possible actions, it is a set of context-specific parameters that specify the culturally permissible and legitimate set of actions. That is, there are parameters of language teaching without which principles would be useless. Thus the study is significant because it contributes to the knowledge base for language teacher education by providing some parameters that account for the situated nature of teaching knowledge.

III. Research Methodology

A. Participants

Theoretically relevant data was collected through interviews with six experienced language teachers willing to share their experience and views with the researcher. They were all selected from different high schools in Shiraz, a major city located in the eastern parts of the country. All of them were form urban areas. They were all male with more than 12 years of teaching experience. All of them majored in teaching English as a foreign language (TEFL). Two of them had earned their master's degree and the others had earned their bachelor's degree. They were selected on the basis of their teaching experience and their willingness to share their views with the researcher because "understanding requires an openness to experience, a willingness to engage in a dialogue with one that challenges our understandings" (Schwandt, 1999, p. 458). The researcher stopped sampling when theoretical saturation was achieved.

B. Data Collection

Following Glaser (2001), interviewing was a process of passive listening. Later during theoretical sampling focused questions were used to corroborate emerged concepts and categories. Once categories began to emerge they were used to advance further data collection. When all the emerged categories were fully saturated, data collection terminated and the researcher turns to the task of writing.

In collecting data, the researcher followed the "all is data" dictum (Glaser, 2001). Thus the researcher noted not only what was being told, how it was being told and the conditions of its being told, but also all the data surrounding what was being told. It means whatever was going on was used for conceptualisation, not for accurate description. There is no such thing for grounded theory as bias data or subjective or objective data or misinterpreted data. It is what the researcher is receiving, as a pattern, and as a human being (which is inescapable). It just depends on the research. Data is always as good as far as it goes, and there is always more data.

C. Data Analysis

The heart of data analysis in grounded theory is based on three types of coding procedures: open, axial, and selective (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Open coding resulted in the umbrella terms "directives and circulars", "teaching teams", "evaluation" and "promotion" as the major mechanisms for creating compliant and uniform behaviour. Axial coding enabled the researcher to relate deskilling (consequence) to disciplined teaching (action), and relate disciplined teaching to its determining conditions (circulars, teaching teams, evaluation, and promotion). Finally selective coding led to the emergence of teaching as a disciplined act as the core category. This conceptualisation had the analytic power to pull together all the pressures that aimed at making teachers' behaviour conform to the top-down directives and circulars.

D. Trustworthiness

The researcher's extensive experience as a language teacher for 10 years working under the same conditions as the participants provided him with theoretical sensitivity to sift through the information and identify the prominent categories. Having determined the prominent themes, the researcher reviewed an unmarked transcript, to see if any new concepts or categories emerged, and also to see if the identified categories made sense within the general context of the interview. Thus the building blocks of the theory were developed through the constant comparative techniques, i.e., by altering between understanding and data. They were then confirmed and corroborated through member checking.

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E. Limitations

Despite the participants' validation of the emerged concepts and categories and the researcher's attempts to triangulate the data against official documents, readers should proceed with caution as they read the findings. Qualitative researchers are the instruments for gathering data, and as human beings, they bring with them their own constructions of the world. However the rigorous analytic schemes of grounded theory helped the researcher ground the findings in the data and avoid personal biases. Despite methodological rigor, however, findings such as these are not a guarantee of truth, for truths are always partial (Clifford, 1986), and knowledge "situated" (Haraway, 1988). We also cannot ignore how interviewer and interviewee negotiate face or manage impressions (Goffman, 1959) in interviews. An interview is but a snapshot in time. Much is left unsaid about events and persons despite the intention of the interviewer to provide a holistic account. Of course, more interviews and stories would deepen our understanding of this exploratory study. Still, the researcher is confident that the categories identified represent a subset of a larger set of macro-structures governing language teachers' work in public high schools in Iran.

IV. Results

Summary of the theory

Constant comparative technique, theoretical sampling and the analytic schemes of grounded theory yielded teaching as a disciplined act as the core theoretical category. Not only does this conceptualization describes teaching (do as you are told), but also it relates this mode of action to the conditions that bring it about (disciplinary power) and the consequences of accepting this conformist approach (deskilling). First, binding directives and circulars specify a set of permissible actions. These sets of actions are then naturalised as good practice through teaching teams, evaluation scheme, and promotion criteria. These conditions turn teachers into disciplined individuals that do as they are told. Since the externally planned and imposed conditions aim at making language teachers' action predictable and efficient, they are collectively conceptualised as disciplinary power.

Disciplinary power describes the process by which individuals are disciplined to conform their action to an imagined ideal. As Gunzenhauser (2007) states, disciplined selves are complicit in their own subjugation when they comply with the procedures of self-discipline and the comparison of one's traits to social norms. Teachers' shallow and simplistic practice in public high schools in Iran is related to disciplinary power rather than teachers' professional knowledge and skills. By trying to be normal teachers don't use their knowledge and skills and over time lose control of the processes and tasks they felt responsible for as teachers (Kelchtermans, 2005). Hence this approach entails deskilling.

A. Binding Directives and Circulars

Directives and circulars suppress creativity in teaching and overemphasise convergent teaching by imposing uniform conditions on teachers working under totally varied conditions. When central agencies impose a strong sense of what teachers should be doing, then there is no space for teachers to reflect on their practice to improve it. They see themselves in the consumer end of educational initiatives.

Top-down policies and initiatives inculcate the idea that others' knowledge is superior to teachers' own knowledge. Once they are issued, the principal imposes them on teachers' work. Under such conditions teachers feel excluded in educational decisions. They see their role as following the directives. Instead of being directed by their professional knowledge and experience, teachers' practice is directed by an awareness of the directives and circulars. Omid cogently explains how directives shape his practice:

Directives are license for action, just like the drivers' license. If you are the best driver but you don't have the license you can't drive. On the hand, having drivers' license enables you to drive even though you don't have the potential to drive. Likewise, we cannot teach without enforcing the directives. Following the directives, one can teach without having the practical knowledge of teaching.

Directives have a similar meaning for Ali. He believes that good teaching involves being aware of and understanding the meaning of directives:

We must follow educational directives and circulars issued by the central bureau of education. If we do otherwise, we will be questioned. For the principal of this high school, a good teacher is the one who heeds directives, understands them and implements them.

These comments clearly indicate that teaching is externally controlled. But control is not limited to teaching. Testing is likewise controlled by those outside the education circle. Hamid's comments illuminates teachers' role in testing:

I must test as the testing scheme dictates. Every year a mandated national testing scheme is sent to teachers. It clearly specifies the how and what of testing. Little divergence from the instructions entails being reproached by the colleagues, students, and principal

I follow their initiatives and I am rewarded for acting in tune with their dictates.

B. Teaching Teams

Within each high school, teachers are allocated to teaching teams of around five to ten people. Teaching teams are appointed a formal leader. Every teaching team holds regular meetings, usually once a month, where work is planned and monitored. Within the teaching team the teachers are involved in each other's teaching. This means that teachers

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can no longer isolate themselves from their colleagues and decide completely individually as to where, when and how teaching will be done.

The organisational division that the teachers are subjected to implies a discipline on the teaching team to which one belongs. It is no longer possible for teachers to cut themselves off and decide themselves how to exercise their profession, as was the case, while it is no longer up to the individual teacher to determine the structure and content of the job, and decisions are instead taken within the teaching team to which one belongs. Hence, adaptability is important. With the head teacher acting in tune with the dictates of the manager, teaching teams are directed towards top-down policies and agendas. Instead of focusing on individual teachers' creativity and initiatives, teachers are all forced into compliance with circulars and directives so that nearly all teachers act and think in the same way. The individual teacher becomes subject to closer scrutiny, primarily by his/her head teacher. Reza's complaints help the reader better grasp how teaching teams and head teachers shape teachers' practice.

In teaching teams the head teacher decides. His decisions are in line with top-down initiatives. The head teacher observes language teachers and approves of teachers who follow the circulars and directives rather than the teachers who follow their own plans of action.

Similarly Omid complains that his teaching is no longer in line with his own professional views. Rather it is the perspectives of the head teacher and his colleague that shape his teaching.

The head teacher has a managerial function rather than an educational one because he reinforces conformity rather than teachers' personal approach. You have to change many times over the years and re-assess your own values. Take up new positions, from different standpoints. And it’s important to be able to see how other teachers think in teaching teams. You are judged to be a good teacher to the extent that your teaching complies with that of your colleagues.

C. Teacher Evaluation

Teacher evaluation has a control function in that teachers, who know they are being evaluated, are always conscious of the consequences of their actions. They are thus less likely to violate norms designed to sustain the efficiency agenda. The institutional arrangements and evaluation scheme makes even the most able and intellectual of the teachers generally tone down their teaching to the level of the approved acts. Evaluation is dead and deaf to teaching as a professional activity because teachers of all school subjects are evaluated by one and the same scheme. Interviews show that dedicated teachers who try to improve their practice are severely dissatisfied with the evaluation scheme. Rather than measuring teachers' professional knowledge and skills, the scheme measures their conformity with rules and regulations. Ahmad's concise and precise comment on the scope of evaluation scheme better surfaces its hidden agenda.

Teacher evaluation scheme measures factors such as punctuality, clothes, teachers' conduct in the classroom, and observation of norms. Thus rather than motivating teachers to be excellent, it forces them to be normal. The items in the scheme do not measure one's professional expertise. Rather it measures the extent to which one adapts to the right things imposed on teachers from the central office.

When teachers can no longer rely on their professional expertise, then there is a great risk that their professional pride will be eroded. The dilemma of professional pride easily becomes a reality when non-professionals are involved in deciding what good teaching involves. There remains no room for professional pride when non-professionals evaluate teachers with non-professional criteria. Behzad's concerns better elucidates this scenario.

Officials rather than professionals define merit. Even in selecting teachers for beacon schools, head teachers are not consulted.

My evaluation score depends on the principal's subjective idea. To keep my position in the high school, I must do as he wishes.

We don't have any evaluation scheme for language teachers. Teachers of all school subjects are evaluated by the same scheme.

Even the scheme does not differentiate between workers working in factories and teachers. The evaluation scheme was not developed by the ministry of education. It was developed by ministry of labour and social affairs.

Our officials seem to feel that the only way to ensure that good education is going on in individual schools and classrooms is to control teachers' practice through checking their pass rate in the final exams. That is they stick to efficiency agenda by measuring teachers' success by the yardstick of pass rate. Since high pass rate is positively reinforced, teachers are disciplined to reduce the universe of possible pedagogic acts to ones that guarantee high pass rate. Evaluation is a disciplinary mechanism that has normalised high pass rate as the ideal. Omid's comments clearly indicates that the externally imposed yardstick of success it a major factor steering teachers' work.

I am judged by my pass rate rather than my teaching techniques and approach. If students fail, the teacher is reproached. This is not fair. Students may fail for a multitude of unknown reasons. If all my students can communicate but they can't pass the final exam, I will face various punitive measures. Very early in my career I found that I am responsible for students' score rather than their communicative capacity. This awareness helped me to gain the highest pass rate in the past three years.

D. Teacher Promotion

According to Dreeben (1970) teachers are salaried employees; they agree, through a written (or unwritten but formal) contract with a school board, on what tasks they shall perform in exchange for pay. That is, circulars and directives

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define a particular set of permissible acts. Promotion is a coherent system of rewarding compliance with the agreed tasks. Teachers are reinforced when they are engaged in the defined acts. One of the subconsciously agreed upon tasks is efficiency in terms of pass rate and final scores. Promotion is a mechanism of reinforcing efficiency. It is extremely unusual and is tied to test scores. To better see how teacher evaluation is contingent upon pass rate, take Reza's comments as exemplary:

The director general gave me the award of advanced skills not for my knowledge but for my pass rate in the final exam. He writes, "We hereby thank you for your ceaseless effort which led to 100% pass rate in the finals of 2004. 100% pass rate is evidence enough to grant you the award of advanced skills. Since I had the highest pass rate in the past few years, they assigned me to the managerial post. Now I am the principal.

Omid corroborates the foregoing comments when he complains that his knowledge and skills in language teaching are not recognized.

Promotion depends on years of experience and pass rate. I am not promoted for my teaching skills and knowledge. I am promoted if I have an acceptable pass rate.

Promotion criteria do the work of normalising and reinforcing a set of non-professional activities. It plays an important part in the creation of disciplined teachers, that is, individuals who conformed to defined activities. Thus a certain mode of thought and action is normalised through promotion criteria. Promotion is the disciplinary technology that allows for a clear and precise measurement of those attributes which power deems important enough to order and manage. In this sense, we can see promotion as an important disciplinary mechanism that creates conformity. Conformity is not the result of overt force that visibly bends the will of those subject to its operation; conformity results from the constant working of invisible constraints that bring us all toward the same normal range of practices and beliefs. To see how promotion criteria normalise a specific set of acts, take Ahmad's comments:

I have to withdraw from my own initiatives and follow the dictates of others. It is only by following the system that I am rewarded.

Every bonuses is for those who follow the system. For instance, teachers of beacon schools are not selected based on their performance in a test, or observation of their teaching skills. They are selected because their approach is in tune with top-down rules and regulations.

Reza also believes that teachers are promoted if they are disciplined, i.e., do as they are told.

Those who have forgotten all principles of language teaching receive a higher salary just because they do what they are told. If you follow your own initiative or if you respond to students' communicative needs, you are marginalized. The reason is that students' communicative ability is not measured in the final exams.

Teachers are aware of the fact that what they do in the classroom is not professionally justified. However, they forsake their professional knowledge and conscience because they are sure that they are promoted only if they do as they are told. Ahmad's points better explains this issue:

I will be promoted if I participate in a set of non-professional activities favoured and specified by the education system. If you participate in cultural activities specified by the directives for four years, you receive one grade. The credit is equivalent to the credit you receive by promoting yourself from BA to MA.

E. Consequence: Deskilling

Binding circulars together with directed promotion and evaluation delimit practice by impeding the prosecution of strategies and techniques supported by the principles of language learning and teaching and reinforcing conformity with rules and regulation. They discipline teachers to do as they are told. Thus instead of following a reflective approach and developing their practice, they follow a disciplined approach and wait for externally produced plans. Since all planning is done by officials, not teachers, the consequences of this is profound for teachers' professional life. Teachers' complaints are indicative of two destructive consequences.

The first is what we shall call the separation of competence from performance in teaching. Being externally controlled teachers' performance is no longer directed by their competence. When central agencies have a strong and heavily loaded sense of what teachers' should be doing, then there will be little time to consider what teachers themselves think about teaching. In the long run teachers lose sight of the whole process and lose control over their own practice, since someone outside the immediate situation now has greater control over both the planning and what is actually happening. Reza vividly explains how his performance in testing and teaching is detached from his competence in these areas:

Instead of following fundamental concepts of testing English, I develop tests by following the instructions given in the testing scheme. Instead of being directed by principles of language teaching, my teaching approach is shaped by the fixed testing scheme imposed by central agencies. Thus instead of using my knowledge of methodology to respond to learners' needs, I teach to the test by responding to the demands of the scheme.

The second consequence is related, but adds a further debilitating characteristic. This is known as deskilling. As teachers lose control over their own labour, the skills that they have developed over the years atrophy. They are slowly lost, thereby making it even easier for officials to increase control of one's job because the skills of planning and controlling it oneself are no longer available. A general principle emerges here: in one's labour, lack of use leads to loss. To better understand how language teachers in public high schools in Iran lose their knowledge and skills over time, take Omid's points.

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When I entered the profession I was fluent. I have a disempowering exit. I have lost my proficiency because all the way I followed a monolingual approach, i.e., I thought English through Persian. I have become an expert in preparing students for centrally planned tests. I have forgotten the techniques of language teaching because I could never use them. Teaching experience in public high schools deprived me of two precious things: my knowledge of language teaching and my fluency in using English language.

V. Discussion and Conclusion

To take structural parameters of practice into account, research approaches moved from the quantitative, positivistic to more narrative-based research that relied on teacher stories as a base of information about teacher knowledge (Carter, 1993). The results of these researches do not lead to the development of generalisations of sample-based findings to population descriptions and explanations that are fundamental to positivistic research, but rather to. . . the framing of patterns with respect to certain themes. Generalisations from this latter form are not laws to which we have to conform to be effective but explanatory propositions with which we can make sense of the dilemmas and problematics of teaching (Carter, 1993, p. 10).

Teaching occurs within a structural context which Cornbleth (1990) argues is the "education system's established roles and relationships, including operating procedures, shared beliefs and norms ... often distinguished as organisation and culture (p.35). Decisions made at all levels throughout the education system, from the central government authority to the school committee, will impact on classroom practice. These decisions may impede or improve practice.

To ensure that decisions made at the top of hierarchy are implemented by those at the bottom of the hierarchy, teachers are exposed to disciplining. According to Foucault (1977) discipline is an effective means of controlling and being able to predict such matters as employee behaviour. The role of discipline is to ensure that many people do their job in a uniform manner and with identical results. To control teachers' behaviour and make it predictable, first permissible acts are issued periodically through circulars and directives. They are then reinforced through teaching teams, evaluation and promotion. That is, they act synergistically to condition teachers to teach in a disciplined manner since some form of uniformity and structure is required for an organisation to function and individuals are thus assumed to be able to renounce certain of their own desires for the good of the collective. Since teachers' actions are directed by forces external to themselves, teaching can be described as a disciplined act.

However, it is characteristic of professional operations that the professionals themselves hold a mandate to decide what the job should consist of, how it is to be done and determine when it has been well done. If teaching is to be professionalised in our high schools, disciplinary power must subordinate teacher power. Only then teachers can challenge forces that systematically de-skill them. They should be trusted to criticise evaluation and promotion criteria from the perspective of their own classroom practices. Professionals must have the autonomy to make decisions that marry skills with knowledge (Goodlad et al, 1990). As Maxcy (1991, p. 160) argued:

Professionalism implies a kind of normative power. Educational professionals ought to have the power to form directives for action with regard to problems arising out of the exercise of their skills and expertise. Teaching professionals ought to have the power to make policy and policy decisions. By professionalism, I have in mind power being placed in the hands of educators such that they may possess leadership in policy and decision making affecting learning in schools (p. 160).

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Teaching English for Police Purposes in Saudi Arabia: An Exploratory Study

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***Abstract*—This paper aims at exploring the motives of Saudi police officers to learn English. The current study reports the results of an experiment in which the researcher taught English to 24 police officers for six months, examined the reasons why they joined this session, and investigated their views regarding the advantages and disadvantages of learning English as a foreign language. Results of the study showed that this group of learners were motivated to learn English and considered it the future language whose mastery would open wide the gates of education and global communication. In addition, the participants pointed out to some shortcomings: (1) six-month sessions are boring and not very useful; (2) participants in the session were not a homogenous group and some of them were not serious about learning; and (3) the Police Training City, the location where the session is usually held, is not an adequate setting for learning. To overcome these shortcomings the participants suggested several solutions that include limiting the duration of English language sessions to three months only, restricting admission in such sessions to serious learners who, preferably, have college degrees, moving English language sessions to the campus of a local university where good facilities are available.**

***Index Terms*— motivation, attitudes, ESP**

I. Introduction

Productive teaching and learning a foreign language are dependent upon influential factors such as understanding the importance of positive learning attitudes and the types of motivation students need to learn a foreign language successfully (Engin, 2009). Previous studies concluded that motivation and attitudes towards learning a foreign or second language are significant affective characteristics that can facilitate the process of L2 learning (Ellis, 1997). A prominent framework to investigate motivation and attitudes in second and foreign language learning is the socio-educational model of second language acquisition pioneered by R.C. Gardner. In this framework Gardner proposed that proficiency in a second language is caused directly by virtue of certain factors like motivation and attitudes to learning that help students achieve higher performance in L2 since they exhibit the desire to learn the second language when interacting with a particular language learning situation (Gardner, 2006). This paper reports the results of an exploratory study that examined the motivation and attitudes to learning English of 24 police officers enrolled in a six-month English language session held in Makkah, Saudi Arabia.

According to the socio-educational model of second language acquisition, three basic variables are behind the mechanism of L2 learning from a social psychological perspective: motivation, integrativeness, and attitudes towards the learning situation (Gardner, 1985). Within this framework L2 motivation is defined as "the extent to which an individual works or strives to learn the language because of a desire to do so and the satisfaction experienced in this activity" (Gardner,1985, 10). This definition is related to the learner's orientation with regard to the goal of learning a second/foreign language. Motivation is divided into two types: integrative and instrumental. Integrative motivation refers to "the learner's positive attitudes towards the target language group and the desire to integrate into the target language community" while instrumental motivation refers to the desire "to gain some social or economic reward through L2 achievement, thus referring to a more functional reason for language learning" (Norris-Holt & Shukutoku, 2001). The two types of motivation have been considered key factors that influence the rate and success of L2 learning and compensate for deficiencies in language aptitude and learning (Ely, 1986).

Students' attitudes to learning are significant aspects that can enhance their progress. Attitude refers to "an evaluative reaction to some referent or attitude object, inferred on the basis of the individual's beliefs or opinions about the referent" (Gardner, 1985, 9). It is important to examine the learners' attitudes to learning "in the sense that if a student feels alienated and disengaged from the learning contexts in school, his or her potential to master fundamental skills and concepts and develop effective learning skills is likely to be reduced" (OECD, 2004, 110). Many educators in the field of language learning proposed that teachers should try to understand what inspires students and explore what they find difficult when they learn L2 (Merisuo-Storm, 2007). For example, teachers should consider the learners' negative attitudes and how they can be improved to create successful experiences that will enhance their learning (Hedge, 2000).

II. Case Studies

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There are many studies that aimed to assess EFL and ESL students' motivation and attitudes to language learning. For example, Liu (2007) investigated Chinese university students' attitudes towards and motivation to learn English and their correlations with students' English proficiency. The study concluded that the students had positive attitudes toward learning English and were highly motivated to study it, and that their attitudes and motivation were positively correlated with their English proficiency. Some other studies examined the different roles of the affective factors in second language learning situations and foreign language learning situations (Ehrman et al, 2003; Humphreys & Spratt, 2008; Dörnyei, 2010). It has been emphasized that in ESL situations there are opportunities to master the target language through direct exposure to L2 community which may improve the learners' attitudes to and increase the motivations to learn the target language. Frequent interaction with native speakers of the target language, in addition to formal instruction in the host environment or in a multilingual setting, offers an advantage for ESL learners to speed up their L2 learning process. Foreign language situations lack this advantage because there is no target language community to interact with (Olshtain et al., 1990).

Previous studies on Arab students learning English revealed various results. For example, Arab ESL students learning English in the United States showed no integrative motivation to learn English. Rather, they were instrumentally motivated to learn English to meet the language requirements set by schools they want to join. These results indicated the significance of promoting more positive intercultural attitudes among Arab learners towards the language community in which they live (Sulieman, 1993). Another study examined the motivation and attitudes of a group of 223 Arab students who pursued their higher education in the United States. The study explored the influence of direct contact with the American culture on the motivation and attitudes of those Arab learners towards English. The study concluded that direct intergroup contact with native speakers, in most of the cases, promoted the development of positive attitudes towards the American culture and high motivation to learn English (Kamal & Maruyama, 1990).

Several studies that surveyed Arab students in foreign language contexts revealed that instrumental motivation is the primary factor for learning English. Al-Shalabi (1982), for example, found that Kuwaiti EFL students were learning English for instrumental purposes. In particular, the majority of the surveyed subjects in that study mentioned that they were learning English "to be an educated person," "to get higher degrees," and "to get a better job." Other studies concluded that attitudes of EFL students towards learning English are highly influenced by the need for English for future careers. Malallah (2000) investigated the attitudes of 409 Kuwaiti college students towards learning English. He found that students of science and arts had positive attitudes towards learning English whereas students of Islamic studies did not have such positive attitudes. Malallah concluded that the students who do not need English to get a job have less positive attitudes towards learning English.

Likewise, Saudi college students showed positive attitudes towards the utility of English (Congreve, 2005). In a study that examined 179 Saudi students enrolled at King Fahd University for Petroleum and Minerals, most surveyed students noted that they liked English which is an indicator of a source for instrumental motivation. Alabed Alhaq and Smadi (1996) conducted a study to look at the attitudes of 1,176 university Saudi students representing all universities in the country towards English as a tool of Westernization and its effect on national identity and religious commitment. The results of that study revealed that those students felt learning English is a religious and a national duty among Saudis. Moreover, the participants believed the use of English does not make them Westernized, neither weakens their national identity, nor corrupts their religious commitment (Alabed Alhaq & Smadi, 1996)

Research in the field of English for specific purposes (ESP) indicated that ESP students tend to learn English for utilitarian purposes to meet their job requirements (Alhuqbani, 2005). This means that ESP is a goal directed kind of language learning where students are not learning a certain language for its own sake, but because there is a need for its exploitation in the workplace which provides them with a certain motivation (Ibrahim, 2010). Accordingly, ESP can be considered an approach to language teaching "in which all decisions as to content and method are based on the learner's reason for learning" (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987, 19). Successful syllabus design in ESP contexts, for example, should be based on a thorough needs analysis process where the learners' attitudes to learning and their necessities are accommodated (Liuoliene & Metiuniene, 2006).

Alhuqbani (2009) found that Saudi police officers are interactively motivated to learn English. In particular, the majority of the surveyed police officers mentioned that they want to learn English because it enables them to think and behave like native speakers of English; helps them recognize the lifestyle of its speakers; enables them to meet and communicate with native speakers, and because English can facilitate the process of getting new friends from English-speaking countries. Results of the same study revealed that Saudi police officers are also instrumentally motivated to learn English for a variety of reasons. Most of them felt using English is important in their higher academic studies and work fields. They thought that a person incapable of communicating in English is uneducated, and indicated that knowledge of English helps them perform their jobs effectively.

The same study indicated that Saudi police officers had positive attitudes towards learning English. In particular, most of the surveyed police officers indicated that they could benefit from mingling with people who speak English and that the process of communicating in English would be simplified if learners get to know those who speak English as their first language. They thought that the experiences of those who speak English had contributed to the development of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in the industrial and technical aspects. In addition, Saudi police officers showed favorable attitudes towards learning English based culture. In particular, they called for the adaptation of cultural

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aspects in textbooks that contribute to the development of the necessary skills in learning English which reflected a high level of awareness of the importance of teaching English through its culture.

This is an exploratory study investigating the motives of 24 Saudi police officers to learn English. The paper examines the reasons why they joined an English language session for six months, their views regarding the session, and their suggestions of how to avoid shortcomings of their learning process. The paper concludes with several recommendations to improve the situation of similar sessions in the future.

III. Significance of the Study

This study is significant because police officers are the focus of investigation since only a few formal studies exist that addressed the situation of teaching English in military settings in Saudi Arabia. The current study reports the results of an experiment in which the researcher taught English to a group of police officers for six months. Educators and researchers should use these results to make decisions that improve the status of teaching English for police purposes. This study is expected to encourage further studies about the subject of teaching English for specific purposes and to help other researchers determine the best research design, data collection method and selection of subjects. More particularly, the data from this investigation provide insights to educators and researchers about how police officers learn English in military settings; what impacts their motivation to learn a foreign language; what challenges can negatively affect their learning, and what strategies can be used to overcome those challenges.

IV. Methods

The current research investigates the attitudes of a group of Saudi police officers (*N*=24) towards studying English and how motivated they are to learn English for specific purposes. The police officers who participated in this study were from the Public Security sector. They were all adults, with ages ranging from 25 to 42. The researcher taught *Writing* to the participants for four hours weekly during the whole session that extended for six months. This session was the first-of-its-kind that any of the participants attended. The participants varied in their education level. Some of them were high school graduates while some others attended colleges before they joined the police. The session started at the beginning of January and finished at the end of June, 2009 covering 21 weeks of teaching, a one-week spring break, and two weeks of exams. The participants had to come early in the morning to the Training City to engage in some sort of military warm-up exercises before classes begin.

V. Instrument and Data Analysis

Data for this research have been collected through a five-question survey that the researcher designed to explore the participants' views regarding different aspects related to their experience of learning English prior to and while attending the six-month English language session sponsored by the Training City in Makkah. The five-question survey was administered at the end of the six-month English language session. During the data analysis procedure, the researcher identified patterns and themes in the participants' responses. Content analysis of this study indicated that the participants had both positive and negative experiences with the enrollment in this English language session. The survey questions and the participants' responses are as follows:

1. Do you want to learn English? Why?

All informants mentioned they were interested in learning English for different reasons. All of them emphasized the fact that English is the number 1 spoken language in the world. Many mentioned they wanted to learn English for communication purposes. In particular, some informants referred to their desire to communicate with non-Arabic-speaking residents who work in Saudi Arabia. This indicates a positive attitude towards non-Saudis who work in this country. Other informants expressed their interest in getting in touch with other cultures through reading books and materials published in English. Moreover, learning English helps some informants have more fun. One of the informants mentioned he wanted to learn English to understand movies and do better in playing computer games.

Other informants pointed out the need to communicate in English in many places like hospitals, companies, and restaurants where Arabic is not used. Several informant mentioned that they wanted to travel abroad, but they hesitated because they did not know enough English. Some other informants expressed interest in browsing English websites to be acquainted with "different styles of news and information". All these communication-based motives to learn English suggest an increased recognition of the significance of learning English and communicating in English.

Fewer learners thought learning English is significant for job-related purposes. They mentioned they were in need to understand more English terms to use in their current work. In contrast, one of the informants mentioned he wanted to learn English to find another job. He stated: "I plan to leave my current job in the police and find a better and more respectable job which is necessary for me to achieve self-esteem."

2. Why did you join the English language session?

In response to this question many informants reiterated what they mentioned when they responded to question #1. Among these responses: "I joined this session to speak good English even though we students were not taught enough English in school", "to watch TV stations that broadcast in English" and "to enhance my skills." In addition, some other informants mentioned they came to this session for different, but interesting purposes. One of the informants stated,

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"joining such training session gives me a break from the daily routine of work". Another informant came here for financial benefits. He stated, "This is a six-month session and considered a good step towards earning additional monetary profits". A third informant joined the session for social motives. He wrote, "Speaking English makes me more prestigious. Besides, I don't want to look like a person who doesn't know what is going on around him in case I'm among people who speak English."

Even though all the informants emphasized the importance of learning English and the multiple advantages of being able to speak English, only a few informants stated that they joined this session for educational purposes. One of the informants mentioned he applied to this session because he intended to pursue higher studies in an English-speaking country. Three informants talked about plans to go to college. Few other informants mentioned they were there because they were willing to join more advanced English sessions after they completed this introductory session.

3. Did you study English after you finished high school?

15 trainees in the English language session stated they didn't study any English after they finished high school. This explains why almost two thirds of the class had serious difficulties in fulfilling the requirements of the course. Only 6 informants mentioned they took English classes in college. They didn't give further details about the nature of those classes. Two other informants gave interesting responses to this question. They mentioned they studied English "simply" but "not officially." Such answers indicated they didn't study English formally after high school. Instead, they could have sought some kind of informal learning that didn't continue for long. Only one trainee mentioned he joined a private institute to study English formally after high school. "Now I'm a part time student in the English department at King Abdulaziz University," he explained.

4. Did you travel to any country where English is spoken there?

17 of the 24 trainees mentioned that they did not travel outside Saudi Arabia which means they did not go through any situation where they needed to communicate in English. Furthermore, none of them expressed any interest in traveling abroad except one informant who mentioned he intended to go to Canada. Two of the trainees traveled to countries where English is not the official language but it is widely used. Those two informants did not mention what countries they traveled to. Only one trainee mentioned he had been to the United States and Britain where English is the first language spoken. Two informants traveled to Malaysia, one to India, and one to Switzerland.

5. How much did you benefit from joining this session?

This is the question that attracted all the informants to give detailed answers. They talked about what they gained from the session, complained against several drawbacks, and offered some suggestions to deal with those drawbacks. Most trainees had positive feelings towards the English language session. Most of them indicated that they got a lot of benefit from joining the session. They expressed these feelings with phrases like "It was a good session," " I got a lot of benefit out of this session," " The session was very good in the sense that it laid the foundation for learning English the right way," and " I got benefit in refreshing my information about English that I learned in high school."

The informants talked about the specific aspects of English they learned during the session. Almost all of them mentioned that they liked studying grammar and memorizing new vocabulary. Fewer informants gave details about more aspects of language they felt they mastered like the basics of listening and speaking, sentence formation, abbreviations, and how to understand reading passages. One of the trainees wrote:

My knowledge of English was limited. Now I made good progress in grammar and writing sentences correctly and reading correctly and speaking more fluently. I wish I took this session long time ago.

Along with the positive feelings that most trainees expressed, there were few trainees who had less positive feelings about the benefit of the session. One of the trainees mentioned that he "had little benefit only." Another trainee complained that he "had no benefit." A third trainee had a similar response but gave reasons why he had that feeling. He wrote:

There was not much benefit from this session. We learned in six months what we can learn in two months. Learners want to feel they can speak English in a better way. They want to feel a difference in their ability to use English. Most trainees paid more attention to how they pass the course than getting the real benefit of improving their English.

A unique response came from a trainee who liked studying Listening and Speaking, Reading, and Grammar, but he did not like studying Writing. He mentioned:

I got benefit from Reading, Grammar, Listening and Speaking, but I did not get any benefit from the Writing course. The Writing teacher was not bad but students were not a homogenous group. I had the hope of learning how to write an essay but the sharp differences among trainees made it very hard to make a good progress in taking the necessary steps to learn the basics of essay writing.

The trainees, especially those who had less positive feelings towards the session, talked about some drawbacks related to the session and offered several suggestions on how to deal with those drawbacks. Seven informants complained that there was no specific curriculum designed for the session. This type of criticism could mean that the books assigned for the different courses did not belong to one series which distracted the trainees' attention. In addition, the trainees could have targeted the Writing course with this comment because the Writing teacher, the researcher himself, decided not to continue using the writing textbook that is part of the same series, *Interactions I*. The researcher took this decision because this particular textbook introduces writing at the paragraph level which is beyond the trainees' level of comprehension since they struggle to write even simple sentences.

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It was clear throughout the six-month session that the trainees did not feel comfortable studying in a military training city where aspects of military life are given priority over educational aspects. The trainees had to sign in every morning in a routine attendance-taking process which seemed annoying and frustrating to them. Four trainees suggested that the session should be held somewhere else to be away from the military atmosphere. One of the trainees mentioned: "The way the military training city dealt with both students and teachers was negative." Another trainee complained against the ill-equipped classrooms that did not help them learn better. He stated: "This place is not good for learning because it lacks any instructional media."

Another drawback is related to the individual differences among the trainees, most of whom were weak. It seems that good students did not have a fair opportunity to learn much. Weak students were frustrated because other students were better than they were and because they felt they could not catch up and be at bar with good students. Furthermore, several trainees were not serious at all. They made it clear from the beginning that they joined the session not to learn English but to get rid of the daily routine of work. What made the situation worse is that about 25% percent of the trainees' salaries were deducted for the six months without being informed and without their consent. In other words, this decision was not made clear to the trainees before the session began. When they discovered that they get less than what they should get monthly they were disappointed, which made them "hate the session and hate learning English" as one of them stated.

No doubt that such salary deduction discouraged the students and killed any motivation they might have had at the beginning of the session. Moreover, the researcher observed that the trainees lost their little motivation because of other reasons. Some students did not do well throughout the session because it was hard for them to be students again after years of disrupted schooling. They did not have the motivation and/or the power to act like students, to take notes, to do homework, or to answer questions. Another factor that could have contributed to the demise of motivation of some trainees was that they discovered that most of the teachers were younger than they were which marked an odd, or even unacceptable situation in the Eastern mentality. The widespread image of a teacher in Eastern cultures is that the teacher is always older than his students since old age stands for more knowledge and wisdom.

There were other points of criticism related to the performance of the teachers. One of the comments stated: "Some teachers were not serious." It was a short comment without any explanation. This comment might refer to cases of teacher absence that happened during the session. It might also refer to the way teachers tackled classroom instruction which supports another comment made by a good student: "Teachers taught the class as a homogeneous group which negatively affected the good students." Actually, when college professors came to teach police workers they were shocked at their performance and got stuck with them because they were not the type of students those professors were used to deal with, which made professors frustrated and maybe unserious. Among other comments related to teaching is this indirect complaint made by another good student:

It is good to select good and well-qualified teachers to teach us but they were not the appropriate choice for us. College professors are used to teach a certain type of students, college students, who are very much different from us. We started from an early stage because of the individual differences. Had we begun at an advanced stage we would have certainly made better progress.

VI. Discussion and Conclusion

The results of this study showed that the police officers who enrolled in this English language session were motivated to learn English and perceived English as a useful language in their life. The participants' responses also showed how English is considered the language of the future by the young generation, a language whose mastery would open wide the gates of education and global communication. The participants' input indicated some shortcomings in such learning sessions. Almost all of them complained that six-month sessions are boring and not very useful, which means there is a need to reconsider the duration of these sessions. It seems that three-month sessions are better and more appropriate for the trainees.

Who should join English language sessions is another significant aspect that should be reconsidered. On the one hand, the participants were not a homogenous group because they came from diverse learning backgrounds and different educational levels. One way to overcome this drawback is limiting admission to such sessions to police officers who have college degrees. On the other hand, several participants were not serious about learning English. They came to the session to take a break from work. Careless participants should be strictly dealt with from the beginning and, in some cases, should be dismissed.

A third downside was related to the location where these sessions were held. The Police Training City is a very inadequate setting to hold academic sessions. Basically, it is a military base designed for training newly-recruited soldiers. The few classrooms available are not good enough to teach advanced skills. Teachers of Listening and Speaking always complained that the sound system and head phones do not function properly. Many participants suggested that English language sessions should be held in the campus of Umm Al-Qura University, a big Higher Education Institution in town, where there are better facilities and equipments.

It is very important to take the participants' input into consideration. In any educational setting, student attitudes towards learning, good or bad, affect their outlook toward learning throughout life. Once educators uncover student attitudes on learning, the challenge is how to use this information to shape positive attitudes. The participants in these

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English language sessions are adult students who can see the future results of their learning, such as seeking promotion or finding a better job. Therefore, participants' suggestions should be considered to create several changes to improve the situation of teaching English for police purposes and to enhance the correlation between the participants' motivation and successful second language acquisition.

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Test Taking Strategies: Implications for Test Validation

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***Abstract*—To collect pieces of evidence for the construct validity of the reading section of a high-stakes test, test taking strategies of 40 test takers were analyzed via a checklist of strategies. The checklist consisted of 28 strategies tapping test takers' behaviors while taking some reading comprehension items. The goal was to see whether there was concordance between the type of strategies and the item types in the reading comprehension passages. For example, if the strategy of guessing is used on inference items, this jeopardizes the validity of the item because there is a mismatch between the intentions of the test makers and those of test takers (Cohen, 1984). Hopefully, it was found mostly the right strategies were used on the right item types. This speaks to the construct validity of the reading section of University of Tehran English Proficiency Test (the UTEPT) which was exposed to investigation.**

***Index Terms*—test taking strategies, construct validity, item type, frequency of strategy, item difficulty**

I. Introduction

The initial impetus for this study was drawn from the reading of Bachman (1990). In a chapter of the book, entitled "Validation", as a piece of evidence supporting construct validity, Bachman draws on Messick (1988), Cohen (1984) and Grotjahn (1986) to convince the readers that test taking processes provide evidence for construct validity of a test. Raising his dissatisfaction with correlational and experimental approaches, Bachman (1990) maintains, "A more critical limitation to correlational and experimental approaches to construct validation is that these examine only the products of the test taking process-the test scores- and provide no means for investigating the processes of test taking" (p. 269).

Cohen (1998) also points out that test taking strategies can be used for validation purposes "While there is nothing new in pointing out that certain instruments used in SLA research are lacking in validity, it is a relatively new undertaking to use data on test taking strategies to validate such tests" (p. 92).

Cohen's (1984) article is also revealing in that it considers the possibility of validation study by taking into account the fitness of presumptions of test makers and the actual processes in which the testees are involved. He maintains that "The main conclusion in [this study] is that a closer fit should be obtained between how the test constructors intend for their tests to be taken and respondents actually take them" (p. 70).

Based on insights gained from theoretical underpinnings as elaborated by Bachman (1990) and the studies of Cohen (1984), Nevo (1989), Anderson, Bachman, Perkins, and Cohen's (1991), and Storey (1997), among others, the decision was made to carry out this study.

II. The Review of the Related Literature

A. Preliminaries

The first scholar to draw attention to the feasibility of gathering evidence through verbal reports is Cohen (1984). Cohen argues that a mismatch between the intentions of test makers and the thought processes of testees will call into question the validity of a test. In other words, if an inference item is conceived to be a reference one by testees, this is a blow to the validity of a test. Kormos (1998) clarifies the difference between think-alouds, introspection and retrospection. For think alouds, researchers instruct the subjects to verbalize whatever that occurs to them while performing a task. For introspection, the subjects are not only asked to verbalize but also to justify their thought processes. Finally, retrospection is different in that the subjects are supposed to verbalize after they have performed the task. According to Kormos, (1998) the disadvantage is that the subjects need to transfer information from the long term memory to the short term memory which can jeopardize the accuracy of the verbalization.

Camps (2003) maintains that recent studies have shown the usefulness of think-aloud protocols in understanding learners' cognitive processes as they perform tasks designed to help them make form-meaning connections when processing input.

B. Theoretical Underpinnings of Protocol Analysis

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Arguably, the best theoretical underpinning was provided by Cohen (1984). But there are also other scholars who are of the idea that protocol analysis or test taking strategies can speak to the validity of a test. One such scholar is Phakiti (2003) who calls for validation research on the relationship of strategic competence and language test performance.

C. Theoretical Basis of Introspective Validation

Perhaps the best theoretical underpinning has been provided by Grotjahn (1986). As a way of setting the stage for the introspective validation, behavioral validation and logical task analysis, he starts by making a critique of the correlational validation of language tests. One reason he brings is that if we correlate a test with another test to see if they show any correlation as a sign of validity assumes that the criterion measure is already valid which may not necessarily be the case. In the words of Grotjahn, "the potential circularity of this approach should be obvious" (p. 161). Another problem is that correlational analyses do not tell us anything about the mental processes while taking tests. The third problem is that "The results of factor analyses depend heavily for instance on the number and type of variables included in a study or on the specific factor analytic technique used" (p. 162).

Grotjahn (ibid) makes the three closely related predictions in terms of the use of introspection methodology:

1- The more analyzed knowledge is, the more assessable it will be via introspection.

2- Foreign or second language knowledge (including skills) is more analyzed than first language knowledge and thus more likely to be accessible via introspection.

3- Learned knowledge is more analyzed than acquired knowledge and thus more likely to be accessible via introspection.

D. Problems with Introspection Validation

Grotjahn (1986) mentions the following problems with the introspective validation. The first one is the controversy surrounding the dubious validity of introspective data. He maintains that the problem can be alleviated in the following ways. One is using logical task analysis. The other one is using supplementary observational data such as "psycho-physiological" reactions such as eye movement. Finally, there are other ways such as communicative and behavioral validation.

Another problem is that introspection methodology produces verbal data that are subject to misinterpretation. Therefore, attempts should be made to correctly and properly interpret the data that come out. The nature of using verbal data is that they "…are reports of something and thus have representational function; their *representational validity* [emphasis original] must therefore also be ensured" (p. 169).

There are two terms that need clarification: communicative validation and behavioral validation. What Grotjahn (ibid) means by communicative validation is that it "attempts to ensure validity by examining to what extent the subject agrees with the interpretation of his or her utterances" (p. 169). The concept of "behavioral validation has been suggested as a means for such an examination in terms of falsification methodology" (p. 169).

E. Limitations of Protocol Analysis

Cohen (1994) mentions the following points as mentioned by critics:

1- Much cognitive processing is inaccessible because it is unconscious.

2- Students may be forced to come up with a verbal response that is not closely related to their actual thought processes.

3- Respondents may provide socially appropriate responses. In other words, their responses may be an edited version of what happens in their thought processes.

4- It is entirely possible that verbal reports may have an "intrusive effect". Their trains of thoughts may be interrupted by the verbalization process and it severely distorts the process.

5- The results obtained may be colored by the verbalization skills of the respondents. This is especially important if the respondents are supposed to do the reports in their L2. Additionally, as Cohen puts it, "respondents may use different terms to describe similar processes or the same terms for different processes" (p. 681).

6- Spoken and written data may be different in nature and may not be compatible.

7- There may also be problems if the testees read in L2 and report in L1. A great deal of information may be lost. The translation of processes into another language may give an inaccurate version of the original and authentic processes.

F. Research in Protocol Analysis

In this section, a few studies which have used protocol analysis will be referred to. One study was done by Anderson et al. (1991) who used a triangulation approach to construct validity. They investigated the relationship between three sources of data: think-aloud protocols, item content and item performance. The chi-square analysis showed that there was a statistically significant association between the reported strategies and the three different item types. Their study provided the incentive for the current study. The authors moved from a product- oriented approach to validation to what is termed a process-oriented approach. They mention a few scholars in the field to set the stage for the study (e.g., Cohen, 1984; Nevo, 1989). The authors contend that so far there have been studies directed at protocol analyses and item analysis/content analysis. But no study has ever brought the three major sources of information together. They claim that theirs is one such undertaking. Twenty eight out of 65 testees were chosen for the study. The entire study

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rested on a test of reading comprehension. After a time lapse of a month, the protocols were collected from the testees. A checklist of strategies as constructed by Nevo (1989) was used as the starting point for the analysis. The testees verbalized the strategies they used retrospectively. The strategies they used were assigned to one of the strategies used in the checklist. Additional strategies used by the testees were also added to the list. Out of 47 strategies used, the ones having high frequency were analyzed and the others were excluded. All in all, 17 strategies were studied in depth. The other angle used in the study was item analysis. Both item difficulty and item discrimination were computed. Any item having an index blow .33 was considered to be difficult. They were deemed to be easy if they happened to be above .67. And finally, they were within an acceptable range if they fell within .33 and .67. In terms of content considerations, three basic item types were considered: textually explicit, textually implicit, and finally scriptually implicit. The authors contend that the most important findings concerned the combination of all three sources of information-verbal reports, item characteristics, and question classifications or item types. Strategy 37 "making reference to time", when looked at from these three perspectives, indicates that when students are coping with direct statement-type questions that actually discriminate well between good and poor readers, they do worry about the time allocation. "Stated failure to understand" (strategy 3) was most frequent on items that discriminated among good performers on the test, less frequent on easy items, and on items that simply discriminated between good and poor readers. "Paraphrasing" (strategy 19) was employed particularly with items of medium level of difficulty, and specially with understanding direct statements rather than inferences or the main idea. "Guessing" (strategy 30) occurred especially with inference items and medium difficulty items. And "matching stem with the previous portion of the text" (strategy 34) was used particularly with inference items, but less on the main ideas and direct statements, more often with items of medium difficulty.

McDonough (1995) raises a few questions regarding the previous study. One question is that whether the triangulation study can be carried out with other skills, like listening and writing. Still another question is whether triangulation can be done with other test formats. For example, can triangulation be done with cloze testing or true - false items? Furthermore, he wonders if the study can lend itself to universality. In other words, whether the same strategies, considering the low occurrence of them, are universal strategies or just specific to one testing situation? A third question and a quite pertinent one is what Alderson (1995) is concerned with. This has to do with whether students perform similarly under test and non-test conditions.

Another study is that of Storey (1997). He attempted to see whether protocol analysis could reveal insights into the validity of a cloze test. The cloze test he used was a mini text based on a long passage. There were thirteen blanks in the passage. The validation procedure was an introspective one. In other words, the subjects were asked to think aloud and talk about the strategies they used while answering the questions. The study was in line with Grotjahn (1986) who argues that correlational approaches to validation are necessary, but not sufficient. The blanks were divided into four categories. The first category was related to discourse markers. The second section had to do with anaphoric devices. The third section consisted of lexical substitutes. And finally, the last section had to do with lexical words. The author carried out the study with thirteen subjects. He divided the contents of the passage into distinct parts: discourse markers and cohesive ties. The following conclusions concerning the discourse markers were arrived at:

1- Some testees were involved in "macro" strategies. But some others were involved in "micro" strategies. The distinction between the two has to with the fact that macro strategies operate at inter-sentential level, whereas micro strategies operated at sentence level. A cloze test is supposed to tap beyond sentence level knowledge, but testees' verbalizations shed more light on the fact that the students were treating the passage not as a piece of discourse as they should have done but as isolated sentences. This jeopardizes the validity of the test.

2- It happened that the testees were involved in translating what they thought were ambiguous into terms that could clarify the points.

3- It was observed that some testees did not understand the meanings of certain words.

Concerning the cohesive ties, the following conclusions were arrived at:

1- Most items were treated at a surface level.

2- Students worked with the items without necessarily having to read the passage.

The above points detract from the validity of the test. Still another study dealing with protocol analysis is that of Yi'an (1998). The researcher did the study on listening comprehension. The setting was a Chinese context. An immediate retrospection study used only four subjects to see the effect of test method on test performance. The test method was an interview with six multiple-choice questions. Although the researcher was satisfied with the results as yielded by the retrospection methodology, the quality of the verbal reports hinged on the probing procedures employed. The selection of the subjects was of great importance. The fact that they were picked up from the similar language backgrounds facilitated the job of verbalization and they were free to express whatever their hearts desired. One prime concern of the researcher was whether test method played any role in test performance. If it did, it could lead to the conclusion that test method was a factor in the validity of the measurement process. In fact, it turned out that the test method exerted an influence in two important and fundamental ways. One was that it favored the advanced students and put the less able students at a disadvantage. Another way in which the construct validity was undermined was that the testees chose the correct answers for the wrong reasons. All in all, the researcher was happy with immediate retrospection methodology and called it as "promising" for assessing the essential EFL listening comprehension test-taking processes.

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III. Methodology

A. The Participants

The participants in the qualitative part of the study consisted of 40 PhD candidates. They answered 35 reading items working with a checklist of strategies. The participants were selected on the basis of their availability. They were rewarded for their time and effort with some TOEFL books and CDs. Some students did not agree to participate. Some of them did a hasty job. As the participants were PhD students and were about to do a research themselves, they showed good cooperation.

B. The Instrumentation

1. The UTEPT

The test consists of 100 items. The three sections of the test are grammar, vocabulary, and reading comprehension. The grammar section has 35 items. The first 20 items are multiple choice completion items. The second 15 items are error identification; 10 items (items 36 to 45) deal with grammar and vocabulary tested in context. The next section deals with vocabulary. This section is divided into two parts: part one has 10 items (items 46 to 55) and part two has 10 items (items 56 to 65). The last section is concerned with reading comprehension. This section has 35 items consisting of six passages. Table 1 summarizes the three sections and parts of the UTEPT.

TABLE 1.
DIFFERENT SECTIONS OF THE UTEPT, THE METHOD OF TESTING, NUMBER OF ITEMS AND ITEM NUMBERS ON THE TEST

Section	Method of Testing	No. of Items	Item No.
Grammar	Multiple Choice Completion	20	1-20
	Error Identification	15	21-35
	Contextualized	5	36-40
Vocabulary	Multiple Choice Paraphrases	10	46-55
	Multiple Choice Completion	10	56-65
	Contextualized	5	41-45
Reading Comprehension	Six Short Passages	35	66-100

2. A Checklist of Strategies

To facilitate the process of collecting the protocols, it was thought best to use a checklist of strategies as Anderson et al. (1991) suggested. There were a few options (Cohen & Upton, 2006; Nevo, 1989; Phakiti, 2003; Purpura, 1988). It was decided to use Cohen and Upton's (2006) checklist. The checklists provided by Purpura and Phakiti were concerned with metacognitive and cognitive strategies. These two strategy types were not the main concern of the current study. Nevo's checklist was another alternative. That was also ruled out on the grounds that it was simple and not comprehensive. Still a third option available for the researcher was the checklist taken and expanded by Anderson et al. (1991). The strategies were 47 in number and not as comprehensive as the one provided by Cohen and Upton (2006) which was adopted by the researcher. To sum up, the justification for the use of the checklist are as follows: First, it was the most comprehensive one; second, it was the most recent one available; and third and related to the second one it included recent trends in strategy training.

This checklist arrived at by Cohen and Upton (2006) has two sections. The first section covers strategies used in reading. The second part deals with strategies used in test taking.

C. The Procedure

1. Data Collection

Some 10,000 test takers took the UTEPT. After some three months, some 40 candidates were chosen based on their availability. They were asked to take the reading section of the test again, this time working with a checklist of strategies.

2. Data Analysis

The reading section items were exposed to exploratory factor analysis. Eleven factors were extracted as the result of this analysis. I this study these factors are referred to as item types. For more information the interested reader can refer to Salehi (2011).

IV. Results and Discussion

A. Test Taking Strategies across Item Types

Test taking strategies were also compared with different item types to see if a relationship could be found between the use of test taking strategies and item types. Table 2 shows the distribution of test taking strategies and item types. Item types have been placed on the rows. On the columns, test taking strategies have been put:

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TABLE 2.
THE DISTRIBUTION OF TEST TAKING STRATEGIES ACROSS ITEM TYPES

	T1	T2	T3	T4	T5	T6	T7	T8	T9	T10	T11
TT1	0	0	97(2)	68 66 67	0	80	73(2)	0	82 84	77 80	0
TT2	94	100(2) 88(2)	97(2)	67	93	0	0	0	82(2)	75(3) 80(3)	0
TT3	0	100(3)	0	0	0	0	92	70(2)	82(2) 84	80 77(4)	0
TT4	72(2) 90 86(2)	88(3) 89	97(2)	69(2) 66(3) 67(2) 68(2)	93(3) 85(5)	0	92	73(2) 70(3)	84(2) 82	77(2) 75(3) 80(5)	0
TT5	94 90	88(6) 100		67(9) 68(6) 66(5)	93(3)		92(3)	73(2)	84(6)	75(3) 80 77(3)	91
TT6	72(2) 94	88	97	67(4) 69(2) 69(2)		78	92(3)	73(3) 70		75 80	91(2)
TT7	72(3) 86(2) 90	89	97	66(4) 68	93(2) 85		92	73 70	82	77(2) 75(2)	
TT8	72	89(2)	97	69 68(3)	85		82(2)		82	80(2) 75	
TT9									82 84(2)		
TT 10	86(5) 94(3) 72 90			69(4) 68	85(2)		92(4)			80 75	91
TT 11	94	88 89(2)	97	67				70(2) 73	84		
TT 12	94(2)	89 100	97(2)		93	78	92	73	82	80 75	
TT 13	94(2) 90(3) 72(2) 86(2)			69(3) 68	85(3)				82	75	91(3)
TT 14	72(2) 86 90 94	89 100		68(3) 69(2)	93			73(3)	84(2)		91
TT 15											
TT 16		100		68(2)			92	73(2)		75	
TT 17	86	100(4) 89(2)	97		93			73(2)	82		
TT 18	86(2) 94 90	89	97(2)	66(2) 67(2) 68 69(3)	85(2)		92		82(2) 84(2)	77(2) 80 75	91(2)
TT 19		100	97	66(2) 67(3)			92	70	84	77 75(3)	91(2)
TT 20	86(2) 94 72(2) 86		97	69(2)	85		92(3)	70			
TT 21	90 (11) 94(3) 72(7) 86(5)		97	69(6)	85(5)			73		77	91(2)
TT 22	72 94 86	88 100	97	67 69 66	85			73		80 77 75(2)	
TT 23	72 90(2)	100(3)	97	66 68(4)				73		75(2) 80	91(4)
TT 24	86 94(2) 90 72	100 88	97	68(5) 66(3) 67	85 93	78		73(2) 70(3)	84	80	

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TT 25	72	89(2)		68 69 67(2)	85				82 84	77 80(3)	
TT 26		100(2)		67	85						
TT 27	90(3) 72 94(2) 86			66(3)	85(3)					77(2)	91
TT 28	90 72 86(2)	89(2) 89(3)	97(3)		85			70(2)		80	

Before going through the interpretation of the table, one point should be made about the difference between reading and test taking strategies. The former has an overall high frequency over the latter. This, it should be mentioned, runs counter to what is found in literature. For example, Cohen and Upton (2006) found that the opposite was true.

B. Interpretation of Table 2

In the case of strategy 1, the highest frequency belongs to items 97 and 73. Both items require a great deal of thought on the part of the test taker and our prediction is that the test taker is going to reread the question. This is the first strategy: *I go back to the question for clarification: reread the question*. The second strategy is as follows: *I go back to the question for clarification: paraphrase (or confirm) the question or task*. Our presumption is that the strategy is going to be used on items that are relatively difficult. One can easily see that the prediction is borne out. The strategy has been used on main idea items.

As for through strategy three which reads as: *I go back to the question for clarification: wrestle with the question intent, the* strategy is probably going to be used on items that are relatively difficult. This is because the testee wants to go back to the passage. Any idea of "going back" is more true of items that place a little of a challenge on testees. It has the highest frequency on item 77 and the next goes to item 100. Item 77, it is to be recalled, was grouped with items 75 and 80, and they all dealt with inferencing and topic identification all of which are liable to present challenges for testees. Now, lets' turn to item 100 to see if the prediction made can become true. This item is an item that is based on topic organization, an endeavor which would necessitate going through the passage again to gain more insight into it. In a nutshell, the more frequent use of this strategy on items that are of inference and topic organization type lends support to the construct validity of this test.

The next strategy to be analyzed is strategy 4: *I read the question and consider the options before going back to the passage /portion*. One prediction is in order: this strategy is going to be used on items that require knowledge that might be independent of the texts and passages. This is because the testee considers the options before going through the text. Probably the testee has a chance of getting the item right even without having to read the passage. The highest frequencies go to items 80 and 85. Both items have equal frequency of five. A high frequency on item 85 is quite justifiable on the grounds that the item is a vocabulary one and virtually answerable without any resort to passages. But what is surprising and not easily interpretable is the test taking behavior of the participants on item 80. This item requires the identification of the primary purpose of the passage which cannot be tackled without reading or even rereading the passages.

The next strategy to be discussed is strategy 5: *I read the question and then read the passage/portion to look for clues to the answer, either before or while considering options.* From what the strategy says, one can easily link it to directly answered questions. Let's see if that prediction is borne out. One can see that the prediction was borne out. The highest frequency belonged to item 67. This item is one of those items which can be answered directly. This strategy has also a high frequency of use on other items as well. These are items 84 and 88. The use of the strategy with these items is surprising because these items are not directly answerable.

Now, it is time to analyze strategy 6: *I predict or produce my own answer after reading the portion of the text referred to by the question.* The strategy has been more frequently used on item 67.

The next strategy to be elaborated on is strategy 7: *I predict or produce my own answer after reading the question and then look at the options (before returning to text).*

Probably, reflecting momentarily before going through the options puts one on high alert. Again, the highest frequency belongs to one of the items which is directly answerable. Strategy 8 does not lend itself to discussion because of low frequency of use and on the grounds that the strategy is more appropriate for iBT TOEFL.

The next strategy is strategy 9: *I consider the options and identify an option with an unknown vocabulary*. This strategy was employed for item type nine which include items 82 and 84.

What follows next is strategy 10: *I consider the options and check the vocabulary option in context*. The highest frequency goes to item 86 which is obviously a vocabulary item. Actually, the strategy was employed ten times for item type 1 which is a vocabulary item. The testees might have been led to the use of this strategy more frequently with item type 1 because of the simple association of "vocabulary" in the strategy and most vocabulary items in the passages.

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The next strategy is strategy 11: *I consider the options and focus on a familiar option.* The strategy is relatively infrequent, with only 10 items occurring on item types. It will not be discussed for the same reason. Strategy 12 is not going to be discussed on the grounds of low frequency. But strategy 13 will be discussed below:

I consider the options and define the vocabulary option.

Building on previous trends, the expectation was that the testees would use the strategy with vocabulary items. As a matter of fact, the expectation was met. It was used 9 times on item type 1.

Strategy 14 will be discussed next: *I consider the options and paraphrase the meaning.* The presumption is that the strategy is going to be linked to items which were challenging for the test takers. With that thing in mind, let's see what actually happened. The highest frequencies belong to items 68 and 73. Item 68 is not that difficult. But item 73 is more difficult than item 68. The facility indices for the two items are .61 and .44, respectively. Apart from the difficulty level of items, the two items are also different in terms of item types. In fine, the grouping of the two items in terms of strategy use is surprising.

The next strategy is strategy 15: *I consider the options and drag and consider the new sentence in context.* This strategy is specific to iBT TOEFL. The researcher deliberately included this one to test testees' integrity in the responding process. As was predicted, no one chose this strategy because items corresponding to this strategy were simply nonexistent.

Strategy 16 reads as: *I consider the options and postpone consideration of the option.* This strategy was the one most testees had a problem with. They did not know what the strategy meant in the first place. One can rightfully wonder whether that could have any effect on the task they were doing. As a matter of fact, one can realize that the problem with the literal understating of the strategy has taken its toll: the strategy demonstrated a low frequency of use which precludes any discussion of it as well.

What comes next comes is strategy 17: *I consider the options and wrestle with the option meaning*. The researcher was walking in the room trouble shooting the points the testees had problems with. The literal understating of the strategy placed an enormous challenge on the testees. What has happened leads one to draw, at least, two conclusions: one is that testees had not figured out the literal meaning of the strategy and so had not used it with many items. The other is that they had properly understood the meaning of the strategy and had used it as such. Both conclusions are sound.

In the case of strategy 18: *I make an educated guess (e.g., using background knowledge or extra-textual knowledge*), before discussing the strategy one thing is certain: the strategy is not obviously going to be used on inference or topic identification items. If this happens, then the construct validity of the test can be under question. That did not happen. As a matter of fact, the strategy occurred more frequently on two different groups of items. One group is vocabulary items. The other group is the items which are directly answerable. The use of the strategy with both groups of items speaks to the construct validity of the test.

As far as strategy 19 is concerned: *I reconsider or double-check the response,* it is a typical strategy among Iranian students. The best prediction is that the strategy will have a high frequency. The prediction was not borne out. One interesting point is that it was not used on vocabulary items except item 91 which was a separate vocabulary and hard to interpret factor. The best guess was that the strategy might be used on items which are of inference type.

What follows next is strategy 20: *I look at the vocabulary item and locate the item in context.* One obvious point that springs to mind is that the strategy is vocabulary specific and use of it with other item types is simply unthinkable. As a matter of fact, it is easy to spot six instances of the use of the strategy with vocabulary items.

The next strategy to be discussed is strategy 21: *I select options through background knowledge.* The mere superficial similarity of this strategy and strategy 18 might drive certain individuals to use the two strategies on identical or similar items. As a matter of fact, the testees performed as predicted. There are twenty six instances of occurrence of this strategy on item type one.

So far as strategy 22 is concerned: *I select options through vocabulary, sentence, paragraph, or passage overall meaning (depending on item type),* some testees told the present researcher that the strategy is a reiteration of the previous ones, and there was nothing novel about the strategy. One interesting point about the strategy is that it was used only once on various items except item 75.

What comes next is strategy 23: *I select options through elimination of other option(s) as unreasonable based on background knowledge*.

There are two points that should be made about the strategy. First of all, it repeats one thing that it did before, namely the use of background knowledge. The other point is that it mentions the use of elimination strategy. The highest frequency belongs to items 68 and 91 with 9 occurrences on each. Item 68 is a directly answerable item and item 91 is a vocabulary item. In both cases, the use of the strategy is justifiable.

The next strategy to be discussed is strategy 24: *I select options through elimination of other option(s) as unreasonable based on paragraph/overall passage meaning.* The highest frequency has gone to item 68. This is a directly answerable one. As a matter of fact, other items in the item type have likewise a good frequency of this strategy use.

The next strategy to be discussed is strategy 25: *I select options through elimination of other option(s) as similar or overlapping and not as comprehensive.*

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Some testees did find the strategy irritating as it contained the word "eliminate". One can see if that is obvious in their performances as well. No distinct pattern emerged. It has the highest frequency on item 80 which is not interpretable as this item would not conveniently lend itself to the elimination procedure.

Turning to strategy 26: *I select options through their discourse structure*, the best prediction is that the strategy will be frequent among items which are related to topic organization, references, etc. Of course, the testees had a little problem with the meaning of the phrase "discourse structure" which was explained to them. Disappointingly, the strategy was reported to have been employed only four times. This can be attributed to the literal understating of the strategy itself despite the fact that it was explained to the testees.

As for strategy 27: *I discard option(s) based on background knowledge*, the testees might have viewed the strategy as being no different from strategy 23. The strategy has a high frequency on item type 1 which is a vocabulary factor and in which options can be easily eliminated.

Finally, the last strategy, i.e. 28: *I discard option(s) based on vocabulary, sentence, paragraph, or passage overall meaning as well as discourse structure*, has the highest frequency on item type 2. More frequency was expected from other items.

V. Conclusions

It was thought best to use a checklist of strategies as opposed to introspection methods. One good thing about the checklist was it that it ensured objectivity as it was structured. On the downside, it limited the strategies. There might have a myriad of strategies employed by test takers which could be possibly captured by the checklist. This could have been alleviated by asking the test takers to come up with additional strategies if they could. So, this is a delimitation of the study.

All in all, different strategies employed by the test takers as revealed via a check list of strategies spoke to the validity of the test in question. What this boils down to is that the right type of strategies were used for the right type of item types which were determined by an exploratory factor analysis on the items. There were strategies which were used infrequently. Henceforth, they were discussed for the same reason. Frequency was used as yardstick to draw conclusions about the validity issues. In other words, the more frequent the proper strategies were used on the right type of item types, the more valid our inferences were. Another point worthy of note was that the difficulty level of items was used as another indicator of strategy use. In other words, strategies of guessing or any kind of non-contributory strategies (Nevo, 1989) cannot be validly used for items that are difficult in nature. Hopefully, it was seen that it was the case that contributory strategies were used for items of high caliber in terms of item difficulty.

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Communicative Language Teaching in the Yemeni EFL Classroom: Embraced or Merely Lip-serviced?

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***Abstract*—This study examines Yemeni EFL teachers' knowledge of the major principles of Communicative Language Teaching (henceforth, CLT) and their classroom subscription to these principles. The findings reveal that although these teachers are fairly knowledgeable of the principles of CLT, their classroom behavior does not always reflect this knowledge, which is most evident in their tendency to resort to structure-based practices. The authors conclude with a number of recommendations and pedagogical implications.**

***Index Terms*—CLT, knowledge, practice, EFL, teacher education, Yemen**

I. Introduction

Until the beginning of the 1990s, English language teaching (ELT) in Yemen had been traditionally structure-based where form had precedence over meaningful language use. However, since 1993, when the CLT-based textbook series, *Crescent Course for Yemen*, replaced the structure-based textbook, *English for Yemen*, Yemeni EFL teachers have been facing difficulties choosing between CLT- and the structure-based practices they had been using for years.

For any teaching approach to be used effectively, its principles need be introduced and its rationale made explicit. Previous research on the Yemeni EFL context (cf., for example, Al-Shamiry, 1991; Bataineh, Thabet & Bataineh, 2008; Thabet, 2002) suggests that reform was limited to the replacement of the curricula. Reportedly, virtually no proper introduction of the principles of CLT was ever made, and, thus, the vast majority of teachers kept on using traditional structure-based techniques.

Despite the existence of strong and weak versions of CLT, it is often the weak version that prevails in teacher-training contexts (Howatt, 1984). The weak version of CLT is often misinterpreted to mean that practices, such as rote-learning, memorization, display questions, and teacher-talk, are inherently *bad* when, in fact, only *how*, *when* and *why* teachers resort to them determine their appropriateness. This misinterpretation underlies the rationale for conducting this study. The authors attempt to explore Yemeni teachers' knowledge of CLT and their subscription to its principles in actual classroom situations.

Another important aim of this research is to identify whether or not part of teachers' subscription to CLT is due to the coincidence of some of its principles with those of structure-based approaches. More specifically, the study attempts to answer the following questions:

1. What is the extent of the teachers' knowledge of the principles of CLT?
2. Is this knowledge, or lack thereof, reflected in their actual classroom practices?
3. Do teachers show a higher degree of commitment to the principles shared by CLT and structure-based approaches than those which are purely communicative?

A random sample of 172 teachers was drawn from all seventh, eighth, ninth, tenth, eleventh, and twelfth grade teachers of the CLT-based *English Crescent Course for Yemen* in the public schools of Al-Moudafar, Salla and Al-Qahira directorates of education in Taiz, Yemen. The data were collected using two instruments. A 25-item diagnostic true/false test was used to assess the participants' knowledge of CLT. Purposeful classroom observations of 47 of these

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teachers, using a 7-item checklist, was conducted for validating the findings and providing deeper insights into the correspondence, or lack thereof, between the results of the test and actual pedagogical practices revealed by the observation.[1]

II. Previous Research

The literature on the Yemeni EFL context suggests that teachers are essentially unaware of EFL methods in general and the principles of CLT in particular (Al-Shamiry, 2000; Thabet, 2002). They have little or practically no CLT orientation to draw their attention to the relative inefficiency of structure-based approaches as opposed to CLT-based ones. Al-Shamiry (2000), for example, reports that structure-based methods are not only dominant in Yemeni schools but also preferred in tertiary education.

The introduction of CLT marked a phase of departing from major structure-based principles, such as continuous drilling, prohibiting the use of the mother tongue and immediate error correction, which have proved quite ineffective in language instruction. CLT never abandoned these principles but rather added a communicative dimension to them through framing them within the learner's needs. In CLT, drilling is used when necessary, the mother tongue is used to facilitate learning, and errors are tolerated as a natural aspect of language learning.

However, ELT literature (cf., for example, Holliday, 1994; Pennycook, 1989) suggests that the transfer of CLT from Western English-speaking countries to other countries is essentially problematic since imported pedagogy may conflict with the social, cultural, and physical conditions of these countries (Hiep, 2007). The literature (e.g. Hiep, 2007; Holliday, 1994; Sakui, 2004) also suggests that teachers worldwide are reportedly eager to learn the latest pedagogical innovations, but whether or not their knowledge translates into classroom practice remains a matter of speculation. Le (2000), for example, claims that even though Vietnamese teachers express their appreciation for CLT during training courses, once they return to their classrooms, they revert to traditional teaching.

Empirical research (cf., for example, Hui, 1997; Yu, 2001) also suggests that most Chinese ELT classrooms are more traditional than communicative even though CLT was introduced in China in the late 1970s. Initially, there was strong resistance to it, and it failed to receive support (Yu, 2001). Until recently, a heated debate has raged between Chinese and Western ELT specialists on the necessity, appropriateness, and effectiveness of adopting CLT in China (for example, Rao, 1996). However, recent research (e.g., Hu, 2002; Zheng & Adamson, 2003) suggests that CLT has gained some ground even though its practice varies by local contexts (Hu, 2002) some of whose teachers equate CLT with progressive pedagogy (e.g., Liao, 2004).

Similarly, Karavas-Doukas (1996) reports that even though Greek EFL teachers have favorable attitudes towards CLT, their actual classroom behavior does not reflect any real commitment to it, which, she speculates, is the result of their inability to translate their theoretical training into actual classroom practices.

Along the same lines, Li (1998) reports on Korean teachers' difficulties in terms of the lack of communicative training, misconceptions about CLT, low proficiency in spoken English and deficiency in strategic and sociolinguistic competences. More specific to the purposes of this research, Thabet (2002) and Bataineh, Thabet and Bataineh (2008) claim that Yemeni ELT practitioners lack proper knowledge of and instructional commitment to CLT, which they attribute to the absence of formal in-service CLT training.

Teachers' inability to properly implement CLT in the language classroom is a matter of great concern. There are claims (cf., for example, Sato & Kleinsasser, 1999; Thompson, 1996) that if teachers do not have a thorough understanding of CLT, they can hardly develop practices appropriate to their context and, thus, would easily revert to traditional teaching. To this effect, Harmer (2003, p.292) claims that "the problem is not with the methodology itself, or with ideas that it generates, but rather with how they are amended and adapted to fit the needs of the students who come into contact with them".

Sato and Kleinsasser (1999) claim that teachers' understanding of CLT is based more on their personal experiences, conceptions, and interactions with challenges in their local contexts than on the theory documented in the literature. Thompson (1996) also reports that language teaching practitioners worldwide hold misconceptions about CLT, which constitutes a major deterrent of its proper implementation in the language classroom.

Teachers' relative inability to provide learners with opportunities for authentic language use is well documented (Legutke & Thomas, 1991; Nunan, 1987). Language teachers are said to be concerned more with teaching pre-selected, seldom contextualized linguistic forms (Hiep, 2007) than with creating contexts for authentic language use. Nunan (1987, p.144), for example, reports a discrepancy between what teachers say they do and what they actually do: "There is growing evidence that, in communicative classes, interactions may, in fact, not be very communicative". Willis (1990, p.128) attributes this apparent contradiction to the fact that CLT underlies two conflicting agendas; one is a syllabus of pre-selected discrete grammatical items and another which is based on the meanings the learner wishes to express. How feasible is it to say to the learner "say whatever you mean" but "use the third conditional"?

[1] For copies of the test and the observation checklist, contact the corresponding author at rubab@yu.edu.jo.

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Along the same lines, proponents of CLT claim that language lessons should not be as much about structure as about the functions served by these structures, and that communicative goals should be an integral part of any language presentation, structure-based or otherwise (Howatt, 1984). O'Neill (2000), among others, argues that language lessons should not be about the present continuous but rather about communicative functions such as giving and getting personal information, asking for and giving directions and expressing opinion. For example, *you're standing in my way* and *you're driving too fast* are complaints while *he is leaving for Paris in June* and *they are getting married in the spring* are about pre-arranged future rather than present actions.

CLT is based on the premise that the primary objective of language teaching is to provide learners with information, practice, and experience to meet their communication needs (Canale, 1983). A plethora of empirical evidence supports the effectiveness of such practice. Savignon (1972) reports that learners who practice communication instead of pattern drills perform as accurately on discrete-point grammar tests, not to mention that their performance in communicative tasks significantly surpasses that of learners who had had no such practice.

Similarly, Montgomery and Eisenstein (1985) report greater learner gains not only in accent, vocabulary and comprehension but also in grammar. They (1985, p.331) claim that

[e]ven if a curriculum designer decides that correct grammar is the primary goal, the results of this preliminary research suggest that language use will enhance progress in this area and that the teaching of grammar does not need to be restricted to formal rules or pattern practice.

However, this is not to give the impression that the emphasis on meaning rather than form is an open and shut case. Whether foreign language teachers should emphasize grammatical accuracy or communicative fluency is still a matter of controversy. There is still no definite agreement as to whether form or meaning should take precedence, which may justify designing language curricula which have both structure-based and functional components. However, CLT objectives are often described so narrowly that it makes it extremely difficult to set time aside for studying necessary structures, which has led to the emergence of alternative approaches, such as communicative grammar-learning tasks (Rea Dickins & Woods, 1988), grammar consciousness-raising, task-based approach (Fotos & Ellis, 1991), teaching grammar as meaning, social functions, and discourse activities (Celce-Murcia, 1991) and input interpretation grammar teaching (Ellis, 1995).

Still, this is not to imply that communicative functions, albeit important, are static. In the real world, these functions vary from one situation to another so much so that only a competent speaker would know how to manifest the same function in different ways, which is achieved only if he/she can generate different structures for this purpose.

The authors recognize the significance of developing the learner’s communicative competence but only with the view that enhancing his/her structure-based competence is an indispensable component of effective language instruction. Nevertheless, instead of "standing alone as an autonomous system to be learned for its own sake" (Celce-Murcia, 1991, p.459), structure-based instruction should be made a catalyst for enabling learners to achieve efficient and effective communication. Thus, by providing instruction which emphasizes both grammatical accuracy and communicative fluency, EFL teachers will enable learners to have more meaningful language experiences, which, in turn, will help them become more successful language users.

Despite a few differences, structure-based approaches share principles which can be traced back to their common theory of language learning. Finnocchario and Brumfit (1983) identify the differences between the audiolingual method, the archetype of structure-based approaches, and CLT as shown in Table 1. However, it is worth noting that CLT, which has served as the predominant approach in the language classroom after the demise of audiolingualism, incorporates many of the characteristics of earlier approaches but still avoids what Stern (1992) refers to as the "narrowness and dogmatism of the method concept".

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TABLE 1:
AUDIOLINGUALISM AND CLT: A COMPARISON

Audiolingual Method	*Communicative Language Teaching*
Structure and form are more emphasized than meaning.	Meaning is paramount.
Structure-based dialogs need be memorized.	Dialogs, if used, center on communicative functions and are not normally memorized.
Language items are not necessarily contextualized.	Contextualization is a basic premise.
Language learning is learning structures, sounds, or words.	Language learning is learning to communicate.
Mastery, or "over-learning" is sought.	Effective communication is sought.
Drilling is a central technique.	Drilling may occur, but peripherally.
Native-speaker-like pronunciation is sought.	Comprehensible pronunciation is sought.
Grammatical explanation is avoided.	Any device which helps the learners is accepted - varying according to their age, interest, etc.
Communicative activities only come after a long process of rigid drills and exercises.	Attempts to communicate may be encouraged from the very beginning.
The use of the student's native language is forbidden.	Judicious use of native language is accepted where feasible.
Translation is forbidden at early levels.	Translation may be used where students need or benefit from it.
Reading and writing are deferred until speech is mastered.	Reading and writing can start from the first day, if desired.
The target linguistic system will be learned through the overt teaching of the patterns of the system.	The target linguistic system will be learned best through the process of struggling to communicate.
Linguistic competence is the desired goal.	Communicative competence (i.e. the ability to use the linguistic system effectively and appropriately) is the desired goal.
Varieties of language are recognized but not emphasized.	Linguistic variation is a central concept in materials and methodology.
The sequence of units is determined solely by principles of linguistic complexity.	Sequencing is determined by any consideration of content, function, or meaning which maintains interest.
The teacher controls the learners and prevents them from doing anything that onflicts with the theory.	Teachers help learners in any way that motivates them to work with the language.
"Language is habit", so errors must be prevented at all costs.	Language is created by the individual often through trial and error.
Accuracy, in terms of formal correctness, is a primary goal.	Fluency and acceptable language is the primary goal; accuracy is judged not in the abstract but in context.
Students are expected to interact with the language system, embodied in machines or controlled materials.	Students are expected to interact with other people, in the flesh, through pair and group work, or in their writings.
The teacher is expected to specify the language students use.	The teacher cannot know exactly what language the students will use.
Intrinsic motivation will spring from an interest in the structure of the language.	Intrinsic motivation will spring from an interest in what is being communicated by the language.

Adapted from Finnocchario and Brumfit (1983:91-93)

Richards and Rodgers (2001) describe other significant characteristics of CLT including its emphasis on the use of authentic materials and language-based realia around which communicative activities are constructed. In terms of the type of communicative activities, learners engage in role play, simulation and games in which errors are seen as a normal phenomenon which does not need to be constantly corrected (Littlewood, 1981). In addition, interaction is an important feature in which grouping, pairing, and cooperative relationships are prevalent in the CLT classroom.

In relation to the respective roles of teacher and student, Richards and Rodgers (1986, p.78) argue that CLT "often requires teachers to acquire less teacher-centered classroom management skills". Teachers are responsible for responding to, monitoring and meeting the language learner's needs. Their role is to organize the classroom as a context for communication rather than correction of potential errors. Littlewood (1981, p.94) describes the role of the teacher in CLT as that of a "facilitator of learning", consultant, advisor, coordinator of activities, classroom manager, co-communicator and a "human among humans".

III. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The findings are reported according to the three research questions. The first question addresses the extent of the respondents' knowledge of the principles of CLT. Tables 2-4 present the findings in terms of the teachers' knowledge of purely structure-based, shared, and purely communicative principles. Note that some percentages are relatively small because the respondents were asked to identify whether each of the items is CLT-related, which reflected in small values for those items which are not.

Table 2 shows the respondents' ranking of how communicative are essentially structure-based principles.

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TABLE 2:
TEACHERS' RANKING OF HOW COMMUNICATIVE STRUCTURE-BASED PRINCIPLES ARE

Rank	Item No.[2]	Item	%
	10	Group work may occasionally be useful but it can never replace formal instruction by a competent eacher.	12
	25	Communicative activities come after a long process of drilling and exercising.	19
	15	All grammatical errors are to be corrected to avoid imperfect learning.	20
	24	Students are to acquire native-like pronunciation.	26
	21	The language items are ordered in the syllabus units according to their linguistic simplicity.	27
	7	The teacher specifies the language the students use during classroom interaction.	28
	8	Direct instruction in the rules of grammar is essential if students are to learn to communicate effectively.	29
	12	Classroom interaction is set to practice the language items intended to be learnt.	34
	4	The use of the mother tongue is not permitted in the foreign language classroom.	35

Table 2 shows that the respondents are fairly aware that these principles are essentially structure-based. That item 10 got the highest rank even though it has the smallest percentage is due to the fact that only 12% of the respondents mistook it for a CLT principle. This means that 88% of the respondents are aware that *group work may occasionally be useful but can never replace formal instruction by a competent teacher* is not a CLT principle.

In contrast, about one third of the respondents mistook item 4, *the use of the mother tongue is not permitted in the foreign language classroom*, for communicative when it is in fact a structure-based principle. These percentages suggest that teachers are not always cognizant of the orientation of some tenets be it structure-based or communicative, as seen in the items which ranged between the highly known as in items 10, 25 and 16, the moderately known as in items 24, 21, 7 and 8, and the poorly known as in items 12 and 4.

Table 3 presents the percentages of the respondents' ranking of shared structure-based and CLT principles.

TABLE 3:
TEACHERS' RANKING OF HOW COMMUNICATIVE SHARED STRUCTURE-BASED AND CLT PRINCIPLES ARE

Rank	Item No.	Item	%
	22	It is possible for the teacher of a large class to organize his/her teaching to suit the needs of all students.	49
	18	Fluency is given more emphasis than accuracy.	47
	23	Training learners to take responsibility for their own learning is useless since learners are not used to such approach.	45
	2	The language skills (listening, reading, writing and speaking) are taught in separate lessons.	45
	1	Group work activities take too long to organize and waste a lot of valuable teaching time.	44
	20	Drilling is an optional lesson procedure.	44
	3	The foreign language is taught in reference to its native culture.	44
	9	Knowing the rules of a language does not guarantee the ability to use that language.	42

The figures in Table 3 suggest that the teachers' ranking of common structure-based and CLT principles are relatively higher than those of exclusively structure-based. However, even though they reflect the respondents' partial awareness of CLT, these rankings may be more dictated by common sense than by any actual knowledge of CLT.

Table 4 presents the percentages of the respondents' ranking of purely CLT principles.

TABLE 4:
TEACHERS' RANKING OF HOW COMMUNICATIVE PURELY CLT PRINCIPLES ARE

Rank	Item No.	Item	%
	5	The aim is for students to communicate effectively and in a manner appropriate to the context in which they are working.	94
	16	The transmission of knowledge is only one of the many different roles the teacher performs in class (e.g. facilitator, language consultant and guide).	94
	17	Tasks and activities are adapted to suit the students' needs rather than imposed on them.	88
	19	Meaning is of extreme importance.	83
	14	Reading and writing are postponed until speech is mastered.	66
	11	The language items (vocabulary and grammatical rules) of the syllabus are selected on the basis of the students' language needs.	65
	6	The communicative textbook can cater to the various needs of the students.	63
	13	Genuine everyday language is emphasized.	53

These rankings are the most accurate among the three sets of principles in tables 2-4. The least ranked item (viz., item 13, *genuine everyday language is emphasized*) was given by more than half the sample while the most ranked items (viz., 5 and 16, *the aim is for students to communicate effectively and in a manner appropriate to the context in*

[2] Original item number in the test and oservation checklist

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which they are working and *the transmission of knowledge is only one of the many different roles the teacher performs in class*), were equally given by 94% of the sample.

Tables 2-4 collectively reveal that the majority of the teachers are fairly knowledgeable of CLT principles, especially test items 5, 16, 17, 19, 11, 14, 6, and 13, which were answered correctly by 94, 94, 88, 83, 66, 65, 63, and 53 percent of the sample, respectively. Moreover, principles common to both structure-based and CLT notwithstanding, that a good proportion of the sample correctly judged items as non-CLT-related is another indication of these respondents' knowledge of CLT.

Numerically, the overall mean of the teachers' knowledge of CLT, measured by the test, amounted to 11.64 out of a maximum of 25 (46.56%) with a standard deviation of 2.82. This is significantly below the accepted mean set at 17.5 (70%). This fairly poor overall knowledge may be readily attributed to reports that teachers have not received any formal in-service CLT-related training since its advent in Yemen in 1993 (Al-Shamiry, 2000; Thabet, 2002), not to mention the well documented shortage of ELT resources in Yemeni schools (e.g. Thabet, 2002). These findings may offer further corroboration for previous claims (cf., for example, Li, 1998; Gahin & Myhill, 2001) that a full understanding of the theory underlying the principles of CLT is painfully lacking.

The 7-item observation checklist reveals that the teachers under study partially subscribe to CLT practices, as shown in Table 5 below.

TABLE 5:
TEACHERS' CLT-RELATED PRACTICES AS REVEALED BY THE OBSERVATION

Rank	Item No.	Item	%
	2	The amount of the teacher talk time is less than the students' talk time.	71
	5	The teacher circulates and observes while students are involved in the assigned activities.	64
	1	The teacher permits the use of Arabic whenever necessary (e.g., explaining new language items, giving instructions for new activities, referring to foreign cultural points, having students translate what they have understood).	26
	3	The teacher involves students in fluency-based activities (i.e. pair and group work).	0
	4	The teacher ignores students' errors in grammar and pronunciation during oral activities (except for accuracy-based activities).	0
	6	The teacher relates the topic to the students' interests and experiences (i.e. students talk about their likes/dislikes/hobbies).	0
	7	The teacher asks more referential and high-order questions than display and low-order questions in teacher-student interactions.	0

Of the seven CLT principles targeted in the observation, four were found nonexistent while three had a 26%, 64% and 71% occurrence. The observation reveals that the teachers do not use group work for enhancing language learning, which is consistent with claims by Al-Shamiry (1991; 2000). Furthermore, these teachers' subscription to structure-based approaches is evident in their use of immediate error correction, neglecting to relate the topic to students' lives and interests, and focusing on lower-order display questions rather than higher-order referential ones.

The two items which had the highest percentage of occurrence (viz., 64 and 71%) were teacher circulation among students during activities and less teacher talk time than that of the students. However, these figures may be a little misleading, for the classroom observation reveals that teachers' circulation among the students was done more for classroom management than for facilitating learning, which was evident in the minimal interaction between the teacher and his/her students during this circulation. Similarly, classroom talk was not necessarily all communicative talk. More often than not, the teacher gave instructions to be followed by the students whose talk was essentially repeating, rehashing lines from the textbook, or answering display questions.

For example, a teacher was observed in a class session in which she used authentic invitation cards to illustrate the content of the lesson. She discussed the similarities and differences between Yemeni and British invitation cards (per textbook instructions) but never went the extra step of personalizing the experience by asking students about their views about or personal experiences with invitation cards.

Moreover, that Arabic was permitted to be used in the classroom with a mere 26% occurrence may be evidence of these teachers' dedication to structure-based approaches. This use may well be driven by a more pronounced commitment to structure-based principles which prohibit such use, than a shy commitment to CLT. In other words, even though using L1 is sanctioned by CLT, the authors believe that the teachers used it due to their structure-based training rather than any real commitment to CLT. That only 26% were found to use it may also be explained in light of the structure-based principle of using L1 as a last resort.

In other words, the observation reveals that, even though the test shows teachers to be fairly knowledgeable of CLT, their actual classroom behavior draws a gloomier picture of their commitment to it. The communicative principles of involving the students in fluency-based activities (through pair- and group-work), ignoring students' grammatical and pronunciation errors (except in accuracy-based activities), relating the lesson to students' interests and experiences (through encouraging expression of their likes, dislikes and favorite pastimes) and asking more referential than display questions were virtually nonexistent in the 47 classrooms targeted for the observation.

The slight mismatch between the results of the test and those of the classroom observation suggests that despite the teachers' fair knowledge of the theoretical principles of CLT, they are essentially unable to translate this knowledge

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into actual classroom practice. It may also be seen as a reflection of the traditional pedagogical culture which, unlike that of CLT, views the teacher as the ultimate source of knowledge. Teachers may feel that playing games with or delegating part of their responsibilities to their students (through peer teaching and cooperative learning) compromises their image as *teachers*. This is consistent with Gahin and Myhill's (2001, p.10) claim that "the prophetic image of the teacher reinforces [his/her] authority, acting against having a good rapport between teachers and students".

These findings are consistent with those of previous research. There is abundant empirical evidence that lacking pedagogical training, thus proper understanding of CLT, is a major deterrent of teachers' proper classroom implementation (Bataineh, Thabet & Bataineh, 2008; Li, 1998; Sato & Kleinsasser, 1999; Thompson, 1996).

For example, Chinese ELT classrooms are reported as more traditional than communicative despite four decades of formal CLT adoption (Hui, 1997; Yu, 2001). Similarly, Greek teachers' classroom practices are said to be more traditional despite their reportedly favorable attitudes towards CLT (Karavas-Doukas, 1996).

IV. Conclusion, Recommendations and Pedagogical Implications

This study has attempted to explore Yemeni teachers' knowledge of CLT and their classroom use of its principles. The findings reveal a slight mismatch between teachers' theoretical knowledge and actual classroom implementation of CLT. The authors conclude that the cycle of innovation in Yemen is painfully lacking, for the change from structure-based to communicative syllabi has been an incomplete one since no serious measures seem to be taken to insure teachers' classroom practice of CLT. To this effect, Kamhi-Stein and Galván (1997) report on the significance of guided in-service CLT orientation for teachers to reflect on the principles of CLT and their potential feasibility in the ELT classroom.

The findings reveal that Yemeni teachers are more inclined towards structure-based principles than those of CLT. Not only is this consistent with the claims of Al-Shamiry (1991; 2000), Thabet (2002), and Bataineh, Thabet, and Bataineh (2008) that CLT is relatively unknown to Yemeni teachers both as a theory and classroom practice but also with claims that teachers are most likely to teach the way they had been schooled regardless of teacher education (McMillan, 1985; Watson, 1995), especially that many of these teachers started their careers long before the advent of CLT in Yemen.

The results seem to suggest that Yemeni policymakers, curriculum designers and teacher training experts should pay closer attention to boosting teachers' knowledge of CLT, which is crucial for proper pedagogical practice in the ELT classroom. A change in textbooks and instructional methods would most certainly not pay off unless it is coupled with training teachers and honing their pedagogical skills.

Moreover, teachers need more opportunities for continuous in-service professional development to improve their knowledge and performance, for it is the claim of these authors that Yemeni teachers, like others all over the world, are resistant to curriculum change toward CLT and that their apparent commitment to certain CLT principles is no more than an incidental outcome of their coincidence with those of structure-based approaches.

Finally, to answer the question posed in the title of the study, CLT in the Yemeni EFL context seems to be minimally embraced but not so much as a result of hypocrisy or lack of inclination as of fairly limited teachers' knowledge of the theoretical principles of the approach.

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The Impact of Teaching Critical Thinking Skills on Reading Comprehension of Iranian EFL Learners

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***Abstract*—In line with the studies confirming the positive relationship between critical thinking ability and language proficiency, this study intended to investigate the impact of teaching critical thinking skills on reading comprehension ability, as well as the effect of applying debate on critical thinking of EFL learners. For this purpose 60 intermediate students were assigned to two experimental and control groups after being homogenized through a Nelson test. Afterwards, a reading comprehension and a critical thinking appraisal pretest were administered to the two groups. During the term the experimental group received 8 sessions of treatment using debate as a classroom activity. To compare the two groups they were given the same tests as a posttest.The analysis of collected data showed significant difference between the two groups on reading comprehension test, but the difference on critical thinking test was non-significant. However, the results indicate that teaching critical thinking skills in EFL context can improve language learning. The study has implication for course designers, teachers and students.**

***Index Terms*—critical thinking, debate, argumentation, reading comprehension**

I. Introduction

Despite all efforts and costs of foreign language teaching in Iran, students suffer from difficulties in language learning skills. The problem appears to be in educational system that teachers, traditionally, do their best to teach 'what to think' rather than 'how to think' (Shuffersman, 1991) effectively about the subject matters which is termed as critical thinking.

In most educational systems, as Paul (1990) says, students gain lower order learning which is associative, and rote memorization resulting in misunderstanding, prejudice, and discouragement in which students develop techniques for short term memorization and performance. These techniques block the students' thinking seriously about what they learn.

Unfortunately, the situation in Iran is not different. Teachers, based on traditional teaching, disregard the learners' views and opinions, not giving them the chance to express themselves. Consequently, students do not learn to use their thinking skills.

The issue of incorporating critical thinking skills in education has raised many contradictory ideas about whether critical thinking can be taught or not. A variety of approaches and models to teaching, measuring and assessing critical thinking skills and abilities have been developed. In addition, teaching critical thinking skills has raised many issues such as culture, emotion, transferability and generalizability of the taught skills which are discussed and answered by the experts. Despite all contradictory ideas and beliefs on teaching critical thinking skills, however, everyone agrees that thinking critically is the major goal of education (Reed, 1998).

Having in mind that Iranian students are not educated as critical thinkers in their first language educational system, providing them with an appropriate context to foster critical thinking dispositions in foreign language setting is of crucial importance. As students do not display the elements of critical thinking in language skills, it is highly worth of investigation to find out whether teaching critical thinking skills could help the students improve their language proficiency. This study provides the experts in the field of language teaching with information about the relationship between critical thinking and learners' performance on reading comprehension texts applying critical thinking method, debate. It yields a realm of study for researchers who are interested in critical thinking and its relationship with language skills. Therefore the purpose of this study is to answer the following questions:

1. Does teaching critical thinking skills have any significant effect on improving reading comprehension of EFL learners?

2. Does participation in EFL classroom debate increase critical thinking ability?

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II. Literature Review

According to Reed (1998), the broad concept of critical thinking has brought about different definitions and terminologies by scholars. He says the lack of consensus on the definition of critical thinking and also its terminology has rested in the grounding of various theories and models in two distinct disciplines, psychology and philosophy. Philosophers have tended to focus on the nature and products of critical thinking, while psychologists have concentrated on the process of cognition, and seeking the conclusion in empirical research. On the other hand, some educators (Kuhn, 1992; Kurfiss, 1988; Marzano et al., 1988; Quellmalz, 1987; Weinstein, 1995, cited in Reed, 1998) have drawn on both psychology and philosophy to develop a rigorous theory of critical thinking for teaching.

Halvorsen (2005) also adds critical thinking is not an easy concept to define, as it can mean quite different things to different people in different contexts and cultures. Nevertheless, instructors can incorporate some of its key elements in their classrooms. He defines critical thinking as: "to think critically about an issue is to consider that issue from various perspectives, to look at and challenge any possible assumptions that may underlie the issue and to explore its possible alternative." (p.1)

Considering the breadth of the concept of critical thinking, Wright (2002) seeks an appropriate definition by means of clarifying the concept of critical thinking and determining what problem the definition should help to solve. For the purpose of teaching, for example, the definition should help the teachers teach and assess critical thinking in school classrooms. Thus, the definition is intended to "preserve the core meaning of the original concepts used to define critical thinking." (p. 41)

Supporting the necessity of teaching critical thinking skills in EFL contexts, Kabilan (2000) says the idea that language learners can be proficient by mastering the mechanisms of language was overshadowed by communicative approach in 1950s, emphasizing that learners become proficient by using the language not learning about language. Today it is strongly believed that using language and knowing the meaning don't lead the learners to be proficient. They need to display creative and critical thinking through the language to express and support their ideas creatively and critically. However, he continues, critical thinking skills should not be taught separately but incorporated in the curriculum.

Throughout the literature Richard Paul (2004) stresses the connection between critical thinking and reading comprehension. As he states, "The reflective mind improves its thinking by reflectively thinking about it. Likewise, it improves its reading by reflectively thinking about how it is reading…" Facione (1992) also suggests there is a significant correlation between critical thinking and reading comprehension. His quotation follows "Improvements in one are paralleled by improvements in other." (p.18)

Viewing reading comprehension as a vital part of second language curriculum, Barnett (1989) describes several reasons for its importance: It remains an important goal in many programs; it can be maintained after students complete formal language study; and it fosters the development of literacy skills. Some of the mental skills employed in reading comprehension, as Grabe (1991) states, are inference, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation which are what experts include "as being at the very core of critical thinking" (Facione, 1992).

Debate

Debate is considered as a method of critical thinking and reasoned decision making. It provides educational opportunities to improve critical thinking. Freeley and Steinberg (2000: 4) define debate as "the process of inquiry and advocacy, a way of arriving at a reasoned judgment on a proposition." As they say, "since classical times, debate has been one of the best methods of learning and applying the principles of critical thinking" (p.1). They continue, we conduct much of our communication in the form of debate whether in the form of "intrapersonal communication" when we have conflict with ourselves weighing the pros and cons in our minds, or " interpersonal communication", in which we take part in an argument to make a decision or influence the decisions of others.

Studies on debate show a significant effect on critical thinking proficiency. The studies show that debaters significantly outscore non-debaters on critical thinking tests. It is "an educational activity that provides students with opportunities to develop proficiency in writing, thinking, speaking, reading, and listening." (Freely, 2000, p.29) Barfield (1989) also concluded that participation of high school students in debate positively correlates with significant gains in cumulative GPA.

A study conducted by Fukuda (2003) on Japanese students showed that "before the debate only 30.8% of students were not afraid of expressing their opinions when they were not the same as others. After the debate this figure rose to 56.7%." Davidson (1995) also concluded from his study, with practicing debate students showed obvious progress in expressing and defending their ideas.

III. Methodology

A. Participants

The subjects for the current study were chosen from among 75 female EFL learners. They were similar in educational background, family and social status, studying English at the intermediate level in English Institute in Karaj Iran. They ranged in age from 16 to 19 years. Most of the participants were high school students, and few of them were freshmen at university. In order to check their proficiency level, a Nelson proficiency test was run. According to the result of

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Nelson test 60 learners were assigned to two groups of control and experimental. The students in each group were (n = 30).

B. Instrumentation

The following instruments were used in this study:

1. Homogeneity Test

A Nelson 150D English proficiency test was administered to ensure the homogeneity of the subjects. It consisted of 50 multiple choice items of knowledge of English structures. The time allotted to take this test was 25 minutes and the scoring was estimated out of 50. Additionally, to estimate whether these 60 learners were homogeneous regarding their proficiency level, an independent t-test was run. Based on the obtained scores and through the independent t-test, it was confirmed that the two groups enjoyed similar level of language proficiency.

2. Reading Comprehension Test

A validated reading comprehension test was administered as the pre-test and post-test. The test included 5 passages, followed by 25 items. Therefore, the scoring was calculated out of 25. This test was administered to both experimental and control group. The reliability, validity, item facility, and item discrimination of this test was determined in the piloting phase of study. The reliability of the test scores was estimated through KR-21 formula as (r = .86).

3. Critical Thinking Test

The critical thinking appraisal test (CTA) that measures some of the important abilities involved in critical thinking including 30 items was administered to the subjects as pre-test and post-test before the treatment to measure their critical thinking ability, and after the treatment to measure any changes in subjects' critical thinking ability through using debate. The Cronbach Alpha coefficient for the reliability was .89. The (CTA) was adapted to a 5-point scale ranging from always to never. Therefore, the scores ranged within 30 to 150. The participants' score were calculated by adding the numbers of the scores.

4. Material for Debate

Considering the purpose of this study, and the strong evidence that debate is the best method of learning and applying the principles of critical thinking (Freely, 2000), eight highly controversial topics were chosen by the researcher. The topics have been informal and controversial in style, selected from the books *Mosaic 1* for reading by Wegmann and Knezevic (2002), *For and Against* by Alexander (1973), and *Landmark* by Haines and Stewart (2000) based on the students' interest. Then they were simplified and updated using the internet sites to be suitable for the intermediate EFL students. The rationale behind the choice of these topics is that debate topics should be highly controversial. If there is agreement on the topic there would be no arguments, hence, no debate.

C. Procedure and Design

In this study a quasi—experimental non randomization control group design was used. In order to test the research hypothesis of this study the following steps were taken. To ensure the homogeneity of the participants in terms of language proficiency the standard Nelson 150D test was run at the outset of the study to 75 students. From the 75 students, 60 were assigned to two groups of control and experimental. The number of subjects in each group was (n=30). Then they were given a reading comprehension test to evaluate their comprehension of written materials. Along with the reading comprehension test they were given a critical thinking appraisal test to check their critical thinking ability before the treatment. After the treatment the same tests were administered to determine any probable changes in the experimental group.

D. Treatment

After the pretest, 15 topics were simplified and given to the experimental group to choose 8 of them based on their interest. As Halvorsen (2005) et al suggest, choosing topics appropriate to the interests of the students is essential. After selecting 8 of them, they were given to the students, one per week. The researcher followed the steps offered by Halvorsen (2005) to hold the debate in the classroom. The first step was to introduce the topic to the students and give them the texts to take home to do research on, and gather the relevant information about. It is widely suggested that having knowledge about a debatable topic is the essential prerequisite for holding a debate. As Willingham (2007) holds, research of cognitive science shows that "the process of thinking is intertwined with the domain knowledge." Thus, it was constantly stressed that they had to equip themselves with relevant knowledge from internet, books, magazines, newspapers, and then share the collected information with their parents, teachers, and friends, to evaluate the evidence on the issue. Then they had to come to the class with lists of pros and cons of the issue. In the next step, the students were divided into small groups to share their opinions and think about the potential arguments that might come from the other side. This process teaches the students how to cooperate which promotes critical thinking. Then the debaters were divided into two sides as affirmative and negative. One of the students first would introduce the topic clearly and define the concepts accurately to remove any misconception about the exact meaning of the words. According to Djuranovic (2003), defining the terms in debate is very important because they determine the topic of the debate and its limitation. In the next step, the debate would take place and the debaters would present their opinions through argumentation. After exchanging opinions, the instructor would follow up the debate with a summary of the students' opinions and views, assessing the strengths and weaknesses, let the students express their opinions on which side was more convincing. This

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part is important because it helps the students to understand that the process of thinking and debate can lead to a real result (Halvorsen, 2005). After each session the students would give a piece of writing of the overall conclusion of the class and their final view of the issue. At the end of the debate students gain scores based on the quality of their reasoning. In the debate session the instructor tried to teach the students how to distinguish between facts and judgments or opinions, how to prove their claims based on examples, common sense, statistic, and expert opinions. They learned to start the argument with "I think/believe that … because … therefore …" (Krieger, 2005, p. 2-3).

At the end of the experiment the appraisal critical thinking test and reading comprehension test which were used at the pre-test were employed again for both groups to determine the discrepancies between the two groups, to probe the probable positive effect of debate on critical thinking ability, and to find out the relationship between critical thinking ability and reading comprehension.

IV. Results

A. Nelson Homogeneity Test

The results of the present study as displayed in tables 1, 2, and 3, indicate the homogeneity of the two groups in terms of language proficiency, reading comprehension and critical thinking ability on the pretest. The mean scores for the experimental and control groups as displayed in table 1 are 19.13 and 18.90 respectively. The two groups enjoy homogeneous variances, -- 5.024 and 5.032--i.e. the two groups are selected from the same population.

TABLE 1:
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS NELSON

	GROUP	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
NELSON	**EXPERIMENTAL**	**30**	**28.00**	**5.024**	**.917**
	CONTROL	**30**	**25.83**	**5.032**	**.919**

B. Reading Comprehensions Pre-test

Table 2 displays the homogeneity of the two groups in terms of reading comprehension through an independent t-test. The mean scores for the two groups as shown in table 2 are 19.13 and 18.90. The homogeneous variances, 3.093 and 3.346 indicates the homogeneity of the groups.

TABLE 2:
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS READING COMPREHENSION PRETEST

	GROUP	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
RCPRE	**EXPERIMENTAL**	**30**	**19.13**	**3.093**	**.565**
	CONTROL	**30**	**18.90**	**3.346**	**.611**

C. CT Pre-test

Table 3 displays the homogeneity of the two groups in terms of critical thinking ability pretest. The mean scores for the two groups as shown in table 3 are 96.10 and 97.83. The homogeneous variances, 13.087 and 13.483 indicate the homogeneity of the groups.

TABLE 3:
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS CRITICAL THINKING PRETEST

	GROUP	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
CTPRE	**EXPERIMENTAL**	**30**	**96.10**	**13.087**	**2.389**
	CONTROL	**30**	**97.83**	**13.483**	**2.462**

D. Reading Comprehension Post-test

Tables 4 and 5 respectively display the significant difference between experimental and control groups in reading comprehension, but non- significant difference on critical thinking appraisal test after treatment.

TABLE 4:
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS READING COMPREHENSION POSTTEST

	GROUP	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
RCPOST	**EXPERIMENTAL**	**30**	**21.67**	**2.468**	**.451**
	CONTROL	**30**	**19.23**	**3.645**	**.666**

E. CT Post-test

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As displayed in table 4 the mean scores of experimental and control groups are respectively 21.67 and19.23. It can be concluded that teaching critical thinking skills has a significant effect on improving reading comprehension of EFL learners.

TABLE 5:
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS CRITICAL THINKING POSTTEST

	GROUP	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
CTPOST	EXPERIMENTAL	30	98.50	16.021	2.925
	CONTROL	30	96.37	15.384	2.809

Table 5 displays the descriptive statistics for the two groups on the Critical Thinking test. The mean scores for the experimental and control groups are 98.50 and 96.37 respectively.

V. DISCUSSION

To support the result in terms of the first question that proves the impact of teaching critical thinking skills on reading comprehension it is necessary to state the views of some cognitive experts regarding these two variables. Some of the mental skills employed in reading comprehension, as Celce-Murcia (2001) quotes Grabe (1991), are inference, synthesis, analysis, and evaluation which are what experts include as being at the very core of critical thinking. "As to the cognitive skills here is what experts include as being at the very core of critical thinking: interpretation, analysis, evaluation, inference, explanation, and self- regulation."(Facione, 1992, p.4)

In this regard, taking the definition of reading comprehension by Dorothy Durkin (1993), "intentional thinking during which meaning is constructed through interactions between text and reader", this construction of meaning during reading is "a complex merger of skills, prior knowledge and text mediated by the language skills, motivation and interest of the reader" (Collins, Gambrell, & Pressley, 2002; Almasi, 2002, and Cambourne, 2002, cited in Robinson, 2006, p.32), which according to Sweet and Snow (2002, in Robinson, 2006, P.32) "covers the full spectrum of Bloom's taxonomy in critical thinking including knowing facts, understanding concepts, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation". Thus the above claim has been crystallized in the significant improvement of experimental group in reading comprehension. As it can be seen critical thinking and comprehension both are cognitive abilities having cognitive skills in common so that improving the first can contribute to the improvement of the other--reading comprehension. This supports the purpose of the study that teaching critical thinking skills has a positive effect on reading comprehension.

The statistical analysis on comparing the mean scores of the experimental and control groups on the critical thinking posttest, however, did not indicate a significant difference between the two groups. This lack of significant difference led the researcher to examine the differences between the mean scores in pre/posttests of the experimental and control groups. As table 3 in the above section shows the experimental and control groups' mean scores on the pretest of critical thinking were respectively 96.10 and 98.73, while these mean scores on the posttest (table 5) were respectively 98.50 and 96.37. This amount of increase in the mean scores of experimental group in the posttest-- 96.10 to 98.50-- indicates the trend in the improvement of students' critical thinking after the treatment period. It can be concluded that debaters made small gains as compared to non-debaters, but their gains were not significantly greater than the gains of similar group of non-debaters. However, the lack of significant difference can be justified from different aspects:

First, to the researchers' assumption the limited time and low number of conducted debates which were inevitable during one term can be a reasonable justification for this lack of significant difference, while the limited time revealed the trend of improvement in students' critical thinking ability and the significant improvement in their reading comprehension, possibly a longer time can bring about better results. The studies done by (Brembeck, 1947; Jackson, 1961; Cross, 1971; and Colbert, 1986) in this line were all conducted over 6 months competition mostly with significant difference in gains. Although the current study failed to achieve significance, the small gains seem to be suggestive of a relationship between the two variables to motivate a further research.

Another possibility considered by the researcher for the lack of significant difference between the two groups on the posttest of critical thinking is that all the students in experimental group were novice debaters participating in debate for the first time. While in the above mentioned studies most students had experience in participating in debate. As Cross (1971) concludes from his study in which the participants were novice debaters, participating in the first semester of debate, while high participation in competitive debate enhances debaters' capacity in critical thinking, low participation may not excess critical thinking beyond the normal improvement in an academic year. Thus, low participation of some students might be a justified possibility for the low gains in critical thinking. This justification indicates that the intensity of time, and the low number of debate sessions for novice debaters are unlikely to reveal a significant gain in critical thinking. The above mentioned studies in which the experimental group outperformed the control group significantly were conducted during a long period of over 6 months of debate, with a high number of over 200 experienced debaters. These factors are considered as the limitations of this study contributing to the non-significant result.

As for the tools for assessing critical thinking ability, Facione (1992, cited in Reed, 1998) believes although all instruments for assessing critical thinking ability have been carefully developed and tested for reliability and validity

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having been widely used for testing people's thinking ability, "none have claimed to test for all aspects of critical thinking" (p.33).

Having the above discussion in mind and considering the lack of significant gains in critical thinking after applying debate in language classroom, the significant increase in reading comprehension of experimental group can be justified in two ways:

First, although debate has not revealed its significant effect statistically, considering its cognitive complexity, it might have indirectly affected the comprehension ability of the students which is again a complex cognitive skill. Pressley (2002) believes, little we know and teach about higher order thinking and reading comprehension. In *Improving Comprehension Instruction* he writes:

"We are far from knowing how to educate readers who will think hard about what they can do with ideas in texts, when they apply and when they do not. There needs to be a great deal of thinking about how students can be taught to be comprehenders that use what they read for intelligent decision making. We know more about comprehension strategies that promote simple memory of text than we do comprehension strategies that promote critical understanding of ideas in texts." (p.3)

Another interpretation is that students might have made benefits from the texts they had read and done some research in preparation for debate. Although the students did not get any comprehension strategies instruction, they were exposed to more reading materials as compared to control group. The materials included the texts given to them for debate and the texts they might have searched for gathering information for the debate. As a result, they were involved in more structures and new vocabulary than control group. All these can be contributing factors to improving reading comprehension. Dorn and Soffos (2005) believe that comprehension is a constructive process, personalized by the ideas and thoughts of the individual readers. They continue, ideas and thoughts cannot be taught; they can only be taught through personal connection:

"What can teachers do to promote comprehension? We can create a set of literal conditions that activate students' thinking process, but that is probably all we can do. The most important tool is the language teachers use to engage students in talking about books. Our classroom must be alive with literate task- rich conversation about books that apprentice students into deeper comprehension." Thus, according to these claims it is very likely that the students' comprehension ability has been improved by the debate in the classroom."

According to the results of the data analysis students who participated in debate sessions during the treatment period obtained significantly higher scores on reading comprehension posttest as compared to control group. Considering that students in this study did not receive any instruction on reading comprehension strategies, it can be concluded that using critical thinking skills can help them improve comprehension as a general cognitive skill, and process information at a deeper level.

As for the second question, bearing all the limitations, the study showed a small gain for experimental group resulting from the treatment. Despite the small difference between the two groups on (CTA) test, and considering all the limitations and restrictions imposed on the study, the findings showed that incorporating critical thinking skills in language classroom is vital to improve language teaching and learning. Every effort students made including being involved in reading materials, searching different sources, sharing opinions with others, cooperating in the classroom, and taking part in the argumentation for debate was a considerable contribution to triggering their thinking skills, in other words, activating their cognitive ability which led to the improvement of their reading comprehension. But before generalizing the result, the need is felt to conduct more research in the field of language teaching.

VI. Pedagogical Implications

As it is strongly believed that teaching critical thinking skills is vital for the improvement of language proficiency, implementing critical thinking principles in the present study can be a creative inspiration to syllabus and material designers, teachers, students and test developers.

The result of the study can inspire the syllabus and material designers to include critical thinking issues both in students' text books and in teacher training courses. Learners are in need of text books that invoke their critical thinking and teachers need to be trained to change their attitudes toward students and themselves (Kabilan, 2000).

Concerning teachers, as they have an enormous responsibility in the classroom, it is crucially important that instead of being exam- oriented and producing learners who would obtain good results on their exams (Kabilan, 2000), they should be more flexible toward teaching, and they should consider students' attitudes, interests, and abilities encouraging them to use their thinking and express themselves critically and creatively.

The application of debate in language classroom shows the importance of domain knowledge in critical thinking. As it is stated in ADSA (2006, p.10), "Familiarity with the issue is the key aspect of preparation for debate … "When the topic was introduced to the students they seemed to be unable to debate, but after they searched about the topic and equipped themselves with the related knowledge they were more eager to participate in the discussion, present brilliant ideas, pose clever questions, and show great ability in critical thinking.

The third side addressed in this study is the students who surprisingly enjoyed the program and after every session of debate they insisted on having a longer period and more sessions for debate. The program led the students to search for information relevant to the topics from different sources independently, while in normal classes they are highly

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dependent to the teachers and the text books. Searching for information would certainly encourage them think independently. The other advantage the students gained from the program was their participation in speaking during the debate sessions, so that even the reticent students were willing to express their own ideas. And finally, writing a report about the overall conclusion of the discussion was a useful activity, encouraging the students to use their writing skill expressing their ideas through writing. As Peirce (2005) cites Cohen, "debate can improve the four skills of the students-- speaking, listening, reading and writing." (p.4)

Test developers are also addressed in this study. Considering the backwash phenomenon in testing, as long as teachers are dependent to traditional testing which requires rote memorization, it would be useless to teach critical thinking skills in EFL contexts. Having in mind that the purpose of testing is to evaluate the teaching program and the improvement of the learners, this study inspires the test developers to bring about changes in testing, developing tests to affect the quality of teaching as well as improving the students ability to be creative in their performance on tests. One popular modal for test developing in critical thinking is Bloom's taxonomy which covers the requirements of testing in critical thinking program.

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Research on High School Students' English Learning Anxiety

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***Abstract*—In order to explore high school students' English learning anxiety in Chinese EFL (English as a Foreign Language) classrooms, this study surveyed and analyzed 105 students from a high school in Dezhou City, Shandong Province, China. The results indicated that students indeed had comparatively high anxiety in English learning. Males have higher anxiety of English classes than females. And it was also found that high anxiety plays a somewhat debilitative role in high school students' language learning, some suggestions for reducing students' anxiety in classrooms were proposed for teachers.**

***Index Terms*—English learning anxiety, high school students, gender**

I. Introduction

Considered to be an important affective variable, anxiety has been found to be correlated with English-learning achievement among different groups of people in various contexts. It has been observed that some students in English classrooms experience anxiety that results in stuttering and fast heart-beating. All of these phenomena are attributed to a psychological anxiety, which have been the research focus of many linguists and psychologists in recent years. Anxiety has been regarded as one of the most important affective factors that influence second language acquisition. Much research (e.g., Bailey, 1983; Horwitz, Horwitz & Cope, 1986; Macintyre & Gardner, 1994; Young, 1991), especially in western countries, has been conducted to find the relationship between anxiety and achievement in the learning of different foreign languages. Most studies (e.g., Horwitz, 1986; Macintyre & Gardner, 1994) arrived at a conclusion that anxiety and achievement are negatively correlated. In China, similar research has also been conducted with different groups of people. Most of them, however, were college students. High school students, who are still at a comparatively low level of English proficiency and thus more easily experience a feeling of uneasy suspense (Rachman, 1998), are overlooked by most researchers. In this paper, the author endeavored to bridge this gap to find out the situation of this neglected group's English classroom anxiety through a study conducted in a key middle school of Shandong Province.

II. Literature Review

Anxiety, simply speaking, is a kind of troubled feeling in the mind. It is a subjective feeling of tension, apprehension, nervousness, and worry associated with an arousal of the automatic nervous system (Horwitz, 1986). Usually anxiety is classified into trait anxiety, state anxiety and situation-specific anxiety. Trait anxiety, as Scovel (1978) noted, refers to "a more permanent predisposition to be anxious" while state and situation-specific anxiety are usually experienced in relation to some particular event or situation (Brown, 2001). Language anxiety, the research target of this paper, belongs to the last category, which refers to the apprehension experienced when a situation requires the use of a second language with which the individual is not fully proficient (Gardner & MacIntyre, 1993).

With the shifting of research focus from teachers to learners in SLA (Second Language Acquisition), affective factors, such as attitudes and motivation, were thought to account a lot for language learning outcomes. Anxiety, as a very important affective factor, has been considered very important, and many studies have been undertaken to explore it since the 1970s. The major concern of the earlier studies was the causes of language anxiety. According to Young (1991), there are six potential causes of language anxiety which include personal and interpersonal, learner beliefs about language learning, instructor beliefs about language teaching, instructor-learner interactions, classroom procedures and language tests. However, up to date, findings by Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986) have been the most influential. They identified three causes of language anxiety, that is, communication apprehension, test anxiety and fear of negative evaluation.

When we explore the effect of anxiety on learning, an important insight to which we can refer is the distinction between debilitative and facilitative anxiety (Alpert and Haber, 1960). Up to now most studies have shown a negative relationship between anxiety and language achievement, that is to say, anxiety is a debilitator in language learning. Krashen (1985) once held in his affective filter hypothesis that high anxiety will prevent input that learners receive in the classroom from reaching the language acquisition device. Macintyre and Gardner (1994) based on a study of 97 college students that learn French, concluded that compared with more relaxed learners, those with anxiety find it more difficult to express their own views and tend to underestimate their own abilities. They also found that in the three

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stages of language acquisition, that is, input, processing and output, anxiety and learning achievement are negatively correlated. Moreover, there have also been some studies conducted to find the negative correlation between anxiety and four aspects of language learning, especially speaking and listening. In Zhang Baoyan's (1996) study of English learners in Taiwan, the results showed that there was no relationship between anxiety and learning achievement. So, from these studies it can be seen that the relationship between anxiety and achievement is probably not a simple linear one. It may be influenced by some other factors, such as culture and learners' proficiency. In mainland China, there have also been some studies conducted in the Chinese context to explore the relationship between anxiety and achievement (Lei, 2004; Tang, 2005; Wang, 2003; Xue, 2005). Most of them employed Horwitz's FLCAS (Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale) and found a negative correlation. Going through these studies, it was found that the subjects participating in the studies were mostly college students. High school students who were at the critical stage of foreign language learning and may experience more anxiety in this process, however, were neglected. This study, therefore, was intended to examine the general situation of high school students' foreign language anxiety and the effects of anxiety on FL (Foreign Language) learning. As well, a comparison of male and female students' language anxiety was examined.

III. Methodology

A. Subjects

The subjects of the study were 105 second-year high school students (46 males and 59 females). They were from a science class and an art class of a high school in Dezhou City, Shandong Province. Their average age was 16. They all had 5-8 years of experience of English learning.

B. Instruments

Two instruments were used for this study. They were a questionnaire assessing students' anxiety level and an achievement test. The questionnaire consists of two parts. One was intended to collect personal information of the participants, such as their name, age, gender, etc. The other was the Chinese version of FLCAS that was designed by Horwitz (1986). This questionnaire consists of 33 statements, of which 8 items were for communication anxiety (1, 9, 14, 18, 24, 27, 29, 32), 9 items for fear of negative evaluation (3, 7, 13, 15, 20, 23, 25, 31, 33) and 5 items for test anxiety (2, 8, 10, 19, 21). As for the remaining 11 items, they were put in a group which was named anxiety of English classes. The respondents were asked to rate each item on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 ("strong disagreement") to 5 ("strong agreement").

The test used to assess students' English achievement was the final exam administered at the end of the semester. The test paper included five parts: multiple choice, cloze, reading comprehension, error correction and writing, which were intended to assess students' overall ability in language use. All testing items were drawn from a test bank, which ensured the reliability of test paper.

C. Data Collection

The questionnaire was administered to 50 science students and 60 arts students. 110 copies were collected back and 105 replies were found statistically valid. Only the students from the science class supplied their English scores of the final exam.

D. Data Analysis

SPSS 13.0 was employed to analyze the data. Firstly, descriptive analysis was performed to compute the means and standard deviations for each item and each kind of anxiety to see the general situation of high school students' anxiety in English classrooms. Secondly, t-tests (t distribution tests) were employed to see if there were any differences in language anxiety between male students and female students. Then correlational analysis and t-tests were conducted to find out the effects of anxiety on English achievement.

IV. Results & Findings

A. The General Situation of High School Students' Anxiety in English Classrooms

The results of the descriptive analyses showed that there were 16 items whose means were above 3.00. And of all the statements the 9th one had the highest index of 3.6571. The mean of the anxiety indices of all the subjects in English classrooms, as Table 1 shows, was 2.9309, which indicated that the high school students indeed had the feeling of anxiety in their English classrooms. Moreover, through the computation of means and standard deviations of each kind of anxiety, it was found that students' fear of negative evaluation, the mean of which reached 3.1831, was especially serious. Among the 16 items whose mean values were higher than 3.00 there were 7 statements concerning it, especially item 3, the mean of which was as high as 3.6579.

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TABLE 1
THE OVERALL SITUATION OF HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS' ANXIETY IN ENGLISH CLASSROOM

Anxiety Variables	Mean	Standard Deviation
Communication Apprehension	2.8867	.48557
Fear of Negative Evaluation	3.1831	.76055
Test Anxiety	2.7734	.71570
Anxiety of English Classes	2.7415	.66185
English Classroom Anxiety	2.9309	.60911

B. The Comparison of Males and Females' English Classroom Anxiety

Table 2 shows that in terms of either the general English classroom anxiety or each specific kind of anxiety, males' means were always higher than females, which indicated that males may experience more anxiety than females in English classrooms. But the results of t-tests (Table 3) showed that there were no significant differences between males and females in most anxiety variables except that of English classes ($p=0.026<0.05$).

TABLE 2
MALES AND FEMALES' ENGLISH CLASSROOM ANXIETY

Anxiety Variables	Gender	Mean	Standard Deviation
Communication Apprehension	Male	3.1897	.61061
	Female	3.0383	.66748
Fear of Negative Evaluation	Male	3.2134	.83637
	Female	3.1539	.68776
Test Anxiety	Male	2.9053	.69587
	Female	2.6510	.71784
Anxiety of English Classes	Male	2.8836	.65992
	Female	2.6059	.64037
English Classroom Anxiety	Male	3.0115	.62022
	Female	2.8583	.59556

TABLE 3
THE COMPARISON OF MALES AND FEMALES

Anxiety Variables	t-value	Significance of t-value (p<0.05)
Communication Apprehension	1.219	0.225
Fear of Negative Evaluation	0.403	0.685
Test Anxiety	1.917	0.057
Anxiety of English Classes	2.245	0.026*
English Classroom Anxiety	1.248	0.216

C. The Relationship between Anxiety and English Achievements

The results of the correlation analysis indicated that anxiety and English achievement were only correlated in terms of test anxiety. And they were negatively correlated (-.277, $p=0.039<0.05$). It was noted that the coefficient of anxiety for English classes was -0.232 which approached the significant level of -0.25. Therefore, the students from the science class were divided into two groups according to their English scores in the final exam. A t-test was then employed to see if there were any significant differences in the anxiety of English classes between these two groups. The results of the analysis supported the hypothesis that was proposed above. It was found that anxiety of English classes indeed affects high school students' English achievement ($p=0.037<0.05$).

TABLE 4
THE CORRELATION OF ANXIETY AND ENGLISH ACHIEVEMENT

Anxiety Variables	Correlation Coefficient	p-value (<0.05)
Communication Apprehension	-.101	0.456
Fear of Negative Evaluation	-.097	0.475
Test Anxiety	-.275*	0.037
Anxiety of English Classes	-.230	0.083
English Classroom Anxiety	-.225	0.102

V. DISCUSSION

A. The Existence of Language Anxiety in English Classrooms

Similar to the findings of Tang's study (2005) among college students, this study indicated high school students indeed had the feeling of anxiety in their English classrooms. And they experienced more fear of negative evaluation. The reasons for such results can be explored from two aspects. One aspect is closely related with high school students themselves. The other mainly deals with some external factors. In the aspect of students themselves, the existence of anxiety should firstly be attributed to their English proficiency, which was not high enough to allow them to communicate with others freely, express themselves adequately in class and answer teachers' questions properly. So, in

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English classrooms where much communication is needed, high school students are more anxious than in other classes. Secondly, it is the cultural tradition that Chinese people care much about their faces, so they don't like to receive low evaluations or criticism about themselves. This is the reason why they experienced more fear of negative evaluation than any other kind of anxiety. Moreover, during high school, the stress of the national examination for college entrance and the serious competition among students also causes some students to pay more attention to others' strong points and their own weak points, which results in the arousal of anxiety. As for the external factors, the reasons should first come from the large context of English learning in China. Research has indicated that contact with the people and culture of the target language could reduce anxiety (Tang, 2005). However, although China has become more and more open to the world, and many foreigners have come to China in the past thirty years, most English learners, especially high school students, seldom have opportunities to communicate with native speakers of English. Thus, high school students tend to experience more anxiety in English classrooms. Moreover, most Chinese teachers in middle schools overwhelmingly emphasize reading and writing, while paying less attention to listening and speaking. The existence of anxiety in English classrooms can also be ascribed to classroom atmosphere (Wang, 2003). In most Chinese EFL classrooms, teachers play the role of controller or dominator. Students usually feel nervous or oppressed. Consequently, they lack a free, relaxed environment for English learning. Finally, another factor that cannot be overlooked is the high expectations of Chinese parents for their children. Such high expectations usually do not encourage students, but often result in more anxiety.

B. Males Have More Anxiety of English Classes than Females

In general, females are thought to be more adept in language learning than males. Female students usually score higher than male students in English exams. Therefore, it is not hard to imagine that females are more confident in their abilities to learn a new language well. Once they gain faith in their capabilities, they will be more ready to "approach threatening situations" (Dörnyei, 2001) in English classrooms. On the contrary, males, who have higher frequency of language learning failure, are inclined to attribute their bad performance in English classes to their low ability. Consequently, they are more anxious about English classes. However, as English is a compulsory testing subject of the college entrance exam in China, students all exert themselves to study it. Though males show less aptitude for English than females, great effort helps to make up a lot for it. Moreover, now in English classes teachers try to provide equal opportunities to students. More experience of English use will reduce their anxiety about it. Therefore, generally the gap between males and females is not very large now. In many English tests the highest scores were attained by some male students. That is the reason why no significant differences were found between them, though males' means were a little higher than females.

C. Anxiety Plays a Debilitative Role in Language Learning

According to the results of the study, test anxiety and anxiety of English classes were significantly correlated with high school students' English achievement. In terms of the other factors, although the relationship was insignificant, the coefficients were all negative. Thus, it can be said that anxiety plays somewhat a debilitative role in language learning.

Actually, the finding of the negative role of anxiety has been noted in many previous studies, e.g., Horwitz (1986), MacIntyre and Gardner (1994), Tang (2005). Usually, high anxiety can make learners get discouraged, lose faith in their abilities, escape from participating in classroom activities, and even give up the effort to learn a language well. Therefore, the learners with high anxiety often get low achievement. And low achievement makes them more anxious about learning.

Another notable finding of the study was the significant correlation between English achievement and test anxiety, anxiety of English classes. In China, high school students usually spend most of their time on English learning in classrooms. Each student usually has 6-8 English classes each week. Moreover, compared with college students, they usually take more English tests. A high school student usually takes a test every three units. And in each term they at least have two large-scale exams – a mid-term exam and a final. Therefore, some students with poor English achievement were anxious about, or even discouraged by English classes and tests.

VI. Conclusion

This paper has presented some findings of high school students' anxiety in Chinese EFL classroom. It was found that most students experienced anxiety in classrooms, especially the fear of negative evaluation. Male students were found to have higher anxiety of English classes than females. Moreover, it also found that anxiety is a debilitator in language learning, especially anxiety of tests and English classes.

Given the situation that anxiety is prevalent in Chinese high school English classrooms; teachers must pay more attention to it. Besides preparing properly for teaching, teachers should take the affective factors of students into consideration (Zhang & Chang, 2004). First of all, they can try to create a relaxed atmosphere for students, which can make them feel safe to speak or express their views. Secondly, teachers should avoid negative evaluation of students in classrooms and comment on students' behaviors with more encouragement. Thirdly, teachers, together with our schools, should take some measures to relax students' attention on exams, such as eliminating the ranking of students by their test scores. Finally, teachers can also explicitly tell students the inevitability of the existence of anxiety in English

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learning and let them know that anxiety can be reduced through the self-regulation of their thinking and study. Although teachers can make use of the above-mentioned means to help students to overcome their anxiety in English classrooms, teachers should not try to help students get away from anxiety completely. Much research indicates that adequate anxiety plays a positive role and can motivate students to maintain their efforts on learning. Therefore, the teachers' real job is to help students keep adequate anxiety, neither too high nor too low. As the study was only conducted in one school, more research is needed to support the findings and to find more about high school students' anxiety in English classrooms.

APPENDIX

English version of FLCAS (Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale)

1. I never feel quite sure of myself when I am speaking in my foreign language class.
2. I don't worry about making mistakes in language class.
3. I tremble when I know that I'm going to be called on in language class.
4. It frightens me when I don't understand what the teacher is saying in the foreign language.
5. It wouldn't bother me at all to take more foreign language classes.
6. During language class, I find myself thinking about things that have nothing to do with the course.
7. I keep thinking that the other students are better at languages than I am.
8. I am usually at ease during tests in my language class.
9. I start to panic when I have to speak without preparation in language class.
10. I worry about the consequences of failing my foreign language class.
11. I don't understand why some people get so upset over foreign language classes.
12. In language class, I can get so nervous when I forget things I know.
13. It embarrasses me to volunteer answers in my language class.
14. It would not be nervous speaking in the foreign language with native speakers.
15. I get upset when I don't understand what the teacher is correcting.
16. Even if I am well prepared for language class, I feel anxious about it.
17. I often feel like not going to my language class.
18. I feel confident when I speak in foreign language class.
19. I am afraid that my language teacher is ready to correct every mistake I make.
20. I can feel my heart pounding when I'm going to be called on in language class.
21. The more I study for a language test, the more confused I get.
22. I don't feel pressure to prepare very well for language class.
23. I always feel that the other students speak the language better than I do.
24. I feel very self-conscious about speaking the foreign language in front of other students.
25. Language class move so quickly I worry about getting left behind.
26. I feel more tense and nervous in my language class than in my other classes.
27. I get nervous and confused when I am speaking in my language class.
28. When I'm on my way to language class, I feel very sure and relaxed.
29. I get nervous when I don't understand every word the language teacher says.
30. I feel overwhelmed by the number of rules you have to learn to speak a foreign language.
31. I am afraid that the other students will laugh at me when I speak the foreign language.
32. I would probably feel comfortable around native speakers of the foreign language.
33. I get nervous when the language teacher asks questions which I haven't prepared in advance.

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Integrating Emailing Tasks into EFL Reading Comprehension Classrooms

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***Abstract*—This study investigated the efficacy of integrating emailing tasks into EFL pre-intermediate reading classrooms. While students in experimental groups were provided with ten passages (ten tasks for each passage) through emails during 15 sessions of instruction, control groups were treated through similar passages and tasks in print. The instruments implemented were (a) Interchange/Passages Objective Placement Test C (IPOPT/C) (70 items) as the homogenizing test, (b) an Information Technology (IT) Inventory (58 items); and (c) a teacher-made posttest (30 items) including two sections of seen (10 tasks) and unseen (20 tasks) passages. Results showed a significant difference between students' performances on IPOPT/C (reading section) and the seen section of the posttest in emailing groups and those in control groups ($p \leq 0.05$). Findings, however, revealed no significant difference between both groups' performances in unseen section of the posttest. As the results of this study show, designing effective emailing tasks can contribute to the improvement of second language reading comprehension ability.**

***Index Terms*—reading comprehension, technology enhanced language learning, electronic mailing, emailing tasks**

I. Introduction

With the advent of new technologies all over the world, novel needs have been introduced to the educational contexts. Nowadays, learners' new expectations have caused language schools to apply such new means of education in their teaching methods. Modern world has imposed several obstacles and prohibited EFL/ESL from achieving their goals. The first and perhaps the most serious one seems to be the lack of time. Great amount of distance, heavy traffic, big tuitions, and fatigue as a result of commuting are some other obstacles on the way of learning foreign languages. In addition, many learners expect newer and more interesting ways of learning a second or foreign language. It seems that new technologies can compensate for this lack of interest.

Electronic-learning seems profitable and interesting. Saving time, energy and money are some outstanding advantages of this new way of education and learning. Electronic-mailing (emailing) is regarded as a subcategory of electronic-learning (e-learning) in which learners send and receive messages, tasks or other items through emails. The purpose of this study is to blend extra emailing tasks with the usual traditional reading comprehension instruction to determine the effects of emailing tasks on reading comprehension ability of Iranian pre-intermediate learners.

II. Review of Literature

We can provide opportunities and prepare our students to work independently through different ways such as teacher selectivity, monitoring, and appropriate adaptability. Ho Mei Lin (1997) maintains that language teachers are responsible to find effective ways to expand learners' opportunities for better learning. He adds that when students become actively engaged in discovering information, they can solve problems and learn on their own which promotes autonomy in return. He also maintains that "Today, information technology (IT) effectively enhances independent learning in our classrooms and can be used as an integral part of classroom instruction" (p. 12).

Whether a student can be successful in learning a foreign language is determined by many factors. Hsia & Chuang (2002), Hsia & Hattersly (2004), Chang (2003), and Shih (1982) all agree that "theoretically, foreign language learners can learn a foreign language well so long as they are provided with a good language learning environment, plenty of study time, strong motivation, effective teaching/learning methods and strategies, enough teaching materials, and a thoughtful teacher who recognizes learners' needs" (as cited in Tseng-Chih Chang, et al, 2007, para. 3).

The role of technology in second language learning has increased dramatically throughout the world over the past decade. These technologies, as Gill (2006) believes, include such elements as "the use of Power Point, email exchanges, web based activities, and synchronous and asynchronous communication (through the use of threaded discussion boards, live chat, and virtual communities)" (p. 19). Such a new environment can be incorporated to EFL/ESL classrooms to achieve more stimulating course materials, attempt more variety of learning styles, access more authentic materials on World Wide Web, and promote online communication in target language.

Reading is a considered as a process involving the activation of relevant knowledge and related language skills to accomplish an exchange of information from one person to another, (Chastain 1988). He continued that "reading

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requires that the reader focuses attention on the reading materials and integrates previously acquired knowledge and skills to comprehend what someone else has written" (p.216).

There is an increasing interest in foreign language reading research and how technology influences reading all over the world. Gill (2006) reports a statistically relevant increase in listening and reading comprehension skills within the technology-enhanced courses. She maintains that technology, when used correctly, is a powerful tool to provide students with the opportunity to (1) become more global and (2) develop higher level critical thinking skills (p.27).

However, further research is required on the particular features of emailing to foster L2 acquisition in the FL classroom. González-Bueno (1998) pointed out that such studies should incorporate careful documentation of the learning process present in the use of email in a L2, a well-motivated measure of the learners' language performance and development, and the observation of learners' behavior after manipulating the identified features of email in L2. In a similar research on the effects of emailing on Spanish L2 discourse, he found that use of emails in L2 classes can enhances participation and improves time/space management, with implications for the quality and amount of content.

Rozgiene et al. (2008) phrased that the thing which makes teachers who are used to a face-to-face teaching environment worried is that learners in technology or web-enhanced language learning (TELL/WELL) can misuse the situation in which they are not under the control of the teacher. However, in adult education usually people who opt for this kind of education do this voluntarily, on the basis of self-investment and we should rely on their best intentions to participate in the course. Rozgiene et al. also emphasized that TELL motivates students by letting them "decide about their study time and the conditions they will run the tasks and organize their study process regardless of whether the other participants of the course follow the same line" (p.17).

González-Bueno (1998) maintained that one of the most important "social effects of computer-mediated communication is a high degree of participation over face-to-face communication" (p. 59). Besides, Gonglewski et al. (2001) emphasized that e-mail could help learners extend what they can do in the classroom and provide a venue for meeting and communicating in the foreign language outside of class context. The nature of e-mail, as he adds, provides the opportunity for learners so that FL learners do not have to be in a specific classroom at a particular time of day in order to communicate with others in the foreign language. According to Rozgiene et al. (2008), there are certainly some learners who welcome a higher degree of freedom in their learning process. As they strongly believe, since learners are naturally anxious and eager to work in the new TELL environment, they can benefit from a couple of strategies such as regular feedback, autonomy development, learning styles awareness, and sharing experience and interaction with others.

Dreyer and Nel (2003) showed that students can benefit from strategic reading instruction offered in TELL. The results of their study indicated that students who received strategic reading instruction in TELL could get both statistically and practically significantly higher marks on three reading comprehension measures than did the students in the control group.

To achieve the goal of this study, the following research questions and null hypotheses were posed:

Q1. Do emailing tasks have any effect on the reading comprehension ability of Iranian pre intermediate EFL learners?

Q2. Do emailing tasks have any effect on Iranian pre intermediate EFL learners' performances on seen and unseen passages?

H1. Emailing tasks have no positive or negative effect on the reading comprehension ability of Iranian pre intermediate EFL learners?

H2. Emailing tasks have no positive and negative effect on Iranian pre intermediate EFL learners' performances on seen and unseen passages?

III. Method

A. Subjects

The participants in this study were pre-intermediate EFL Iranian students who took classes in Ferdowsi Language School, Mashhad, Iran. Since school followed segregated educational system, all male and female adult participants (N = 51), aged 18 to 30, had to attend 4 separated classes. Two classes (N = 26, 12 males and 14 females) were chosen as the control group and two other classes (N = 25, 12 males and 13 females) as the experimental group.

B. Instrumentation

To collect the required data, several instruments were employed in this study:

(1) Interchange/Passages Objective Placement Test. In order to make sure that all participants were homogeneous and truly at the same level of language proficiency, the Interchange/Passages Objective Placement Test, version C (IPOPT/C) developed by Lesley et al, (2005) was administered. This test had three main sections including listening (20), reading (20), and language use (30) sections. Learners were supposed to gain scores between 18 and 23 out of 70. Participants were supposed to gain scores between 18 and 23 in order to be suitable for pre-intermediate level according to the scoring guidelines of this instrument. Learners in this range of scores were placed at level 4 in which they are taught the second half of Interchange book series one. Two classes were randomly selected as control, one male and one female, and the two other classes as experimental groups, one male and one female. The reading section (20 items) of this test was regarded as pretest so that learners 'progress in reading ability could be determined by comparing learners'

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pretest and posttest scores of this section. The reliability of IPOPT/C, computed through Cronbach's Alpha, was high (r = .854).

(2) Information Technology (IT) Inventory. Since the treatment in experimental group included reading tasks through emails, the researcher had to determine learners' degree of familiarity with the Internet. To serve this purpose, participants in experimental groups were asked to fill out an IT inventory. This inventory consisted of three sections with the total number of 58 items. To avoid any misunderstanding, the questionnaire was presented in Persian. Motallebzadeh and Ghaemi (2009) reported a relatively high reliability for the Persian version as (r = .75).

(3) Researcher-made Posttest. To measure degree of achievement during the course, a 50-item reading comprehension posttest was employed. This test consisted of three different sections: the first section including 20 items was exactly the reading section of IPOPT/C which was administered again at the end of the course in order to measure the progress of the learners' reading comprehension ability. Two unseen passages with 20 tasks and one seen passage with 10 tasks formed the second and third sections of this reading comprehension posttest. The seen items were selected from among reading comprehension tasks applied during the course. The researcher-made sections of this test were piloted with 25 participants of the same level and an internal consistency of (r = .72) was estimated through Cronbach's Alpha.

C. Procedure

The treatment lasted 5 weeks, 3 sessions a week, excluding the sessions assigned for the tests. Among the four groups (N = 52), two were selected as control, one male (N = 12) and one female (N = 14), and the other two groups as experimental, one male (N = 12) and one female (N = 14), randomly. To ensure the homogeneity of the groups at the outset of the study, all participants took IPOPT/C (2005). Participants in experimental groups (N = 26) took an IT questionnaire before the treatment. Only one female proved to be unfamiliar with the basics of IT and emailing; she was transferred to another class and 25 participants formed excremental groups (12 males and 13 females).

During the course the participants were given 10 reading passages, two passages per week, along with ten reading comprehension tasks for each. The passages which were used as extra reading comprehension passages and tasks were carefully selected. This selection regarded similarity in readability and themes. Participants in both control and experimental groups attended conventional classes and took extra reading passages. While learners in experimental groups received extra passages through emails, those in control groups received the same passages in print. The researcher provided the participants in experimental groups an email address and asked all to send him a reply email containing their first and last names as the first step in the treatment.

Participants in control groups received a passage along with ten reading comprehension tasks in print at the end of each session, twice a week. They took this reading comprehension activity home and brought it back the next session with tasks done. Then they had discussions about that passage in the class and the correct answers were given by the teacher with the help of learners. On the other hand learners in experimental groups received a passage along with ten reading comprehension tasks through email after each session. The teacher determined a deadline for each extra reading comprehension activity. Then all learners sent the teacher their tasks done. The teacher corrected them and sent back the correct answers to them.

IV. Results and Discussions

Having collected the required data based on the above mentioned data collection instruments and procedures, the researcher conducted the analysis of data and tested the hypothesis formulated for the present study.

A. Results of Homogenizing Test

To compare the participants' level of language proficiency at the beginning of the study in experimental and control groups, an independent-sample t-test was conducted. (see Table 1).

TABLE 1:
RESULTS OF T-TEST ANALYSIS FOR IPOPT/C (HOMOGENIZING TEST)

Groups	N	M	SD	t	df	*p*
Cont.	26	20.50	1.72	-.04	49	.97
Exp.	25	20.52	1.80			

As the results of Table 1 shows, there is no statistically significant difference [t (49) = -.04, p = 0.97(two-tailed)] between control (M = 20.50, SD = 1.72) and experimental (M = 20.52, SD = 1.80) groups with regard to language proficiency which confirms the homogeneity of the participants at the outset of the study.

Also, a t-test analysis was used to determine the homogeneity of the participants' reading comprehension ability before the treatment begins. Table 2 summarizes the results for this analysis.

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TABLE 2:
RESULTS OF T-TEST ANALYSIS FOR READING COMPREHENSION SECTION OF IPOPT/C

Groups	N	M	SD	t	Df	*p*
Cont.	26	6.73	2.67	-.17	49	.87
Exp.	25	6.84	1.98			

As Table 2 indicates, there is no significant difference [t (49) = -.17, p = 0.87(two-tailed)] between control (M = 6.73, SD = 2.67) and experimental (M = 6.84, SD = 1.98) groups which confirms that the participants possessed similar reading ability before the treatment.

Due to the segregated educational system of the language school, the researcher used a t-test analysis to see if male and female participants were of similar level of reading proficiency at the outset of the study. Tables 3 and 4 show the results for both control and experimental groups.

TABLE 3:
RESULTS OF T-TEST ANALYSIS FOR READING SECTION OF IPOPT/C BETWEEN MALES & FEMALES (CONTROL GROUP)

Groups	N	M	SD	t	df	*p*
Male	12	7.08	3.03	-.61	24	.54
Female	14	6.43	2.38			

TABLE 4:
RESULTS OF T-TEST ANALYSIS FOR READING SECTION OF IPOPT/C BETWEEN MALES & FEMALES (EXPERIMENTAL GROUP)

Groups	N	M	SD	t	df	*p*
Male	12	6.92	2.19	-.18	23	.86
Female	13	6.77	1.83			

As Table 3 reveals, no significant difference [t (24) = -.61, p = 0.54 (two-tailed)] is found between male (M = 7.08, SD = 3.03) and female (M = 6.43, SD = 2.38) participants' scores in control group before the treatment begins. Also, as Table 4 shows, a significant difference [t (23) = -.18, p = 0.86 (two-tailed)] is found between the scores of male (M = 6.92, SD = 2.19) and female (M = 6.77, SD = 1.83) participants in experimental group before the treatment begins. This proves that male and female participants were similar in reading proficiency at the beginning of the study.

B. Results of Reading Comprehension Tests (Posttest)

As mentioned in instrumentation, the reading comprehension test in this study included three sections: reading section of IPOPT/C, two unseen passages, and one seen passage. To compare participants' performances in pretest and posttest on one hand and the performances of control and experimental groups on the other, the researcher conducted t-tests for their scores in the reading comprehension test as a whole and its separate sections.

Since this research investigated the effect of emailing tasks on reading comprehension ability of the participants, the researcher regarded the reading section of IPOPT/C as pretest and administered the same section at the end of the course as a part of the posttest. Comparing participants' scores in the reading section of IPOPT/C in pretest and posttest, the researcher found that learners in experimental groups gained higher scores than the learners did in control groups in posttest (See Table 5 for the results).

TABLE 5:
RESULTS OF T-TEST ANALYSIS FOR READING SECTION OF IPOPT/C BEFORE & AFTER TREATMENT

Groups	N	M	SD	t	df	*P*
Cont.	26	9.41	3.45	2.25	49	.03
Exp.	25	16.33	2.39			

As Table 5 reveals, participants in experimental groups (M = 16.33, SD = 2.39) significantly outperformed [t (49) = 2.25, p = .03 (two-tailed)] those in control groups (M = 9.41, SD = 3.45) in reading section of the IPOPT/C.

To compare the performances of the participants in the other two sections (seen and unseen) of the posttest, t-test analysis was conducted. Tables 6 and 7 show the results.

TABLE 6:
RESULTS OF T-TEST ANALYSIS FOR THE READING COMPREHENSION (SEEN SECTION) OF POSTTEST

Groups	N	M	SD	t	df	*p*
Cont.	26	7.27	1.76	-2.80	49	.007
Exp.	25	8.52	1.42			

As the results in Table 6 show, participants' scores in experimental groups (M = 8.52, SD = 1.42) are much higher than those in control groups (M = 7.27, SD = 1.76) and reflect a significant difference [t (49) = 2.80, p = .007 (two-tailed)].

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TABLE 7:
RESULTS OF T-TEST ANALYSIS FOR READING COMPREHENSION (UNSEEN SECTION) OF THE POSTTEST

Groups	N	M	SD	t	df	*P*
Cont.	26	5.58	.87	-.08	49	.94
Exp.	25	5.60	1.18			

As Table 7 indicates, there is no significant difference [t (49) = -.08, p = .94 (two-tailed)] between the performances of experimental (M = 5.58, SD = .87) and control (M = 5.60, SD = 1.18) groups over the unseen section of posttest.

In order to compare the performances of the participants in experimental and control groups over the whole test and examine the effect of the treatment, a t-test analysis was used. Table 8 summarizes the results for this analysis.

TABLE 8:
RESULTS OF T-TEST FOR THE WHOLE POSTTEST

Groups	N	M	SD	T	df	*P*
Cont.	26	24.58	2.41	-4.34	49	.00
Exp.	25	28.08	3.31			

According to results in Table 8, participants in experimental groups (*M* = 28.08, *SD* = 3.31), receiving emailing tasks, outperformed much higher than those in control groups (*M* = 24.58, *SD* = 2.41) indicating a significant difference [*t* (49) = -4.43, *p* = .00 (two-tailed)].

To test the probable effect of gender on the final results, a t-test analysis was carried out between the performances of males and females in the posttest. Tables 9 and 10 show the results.

TABLE 9:
RESULTS OF T-TEST ANALYSIS FOR THE POSTTEST BETWEEN MALES & FEMALES (CONTROL GROUP)

Groups	N	M	SD	t	df	*p*
Male	12	24.58	3.30	.27	24	.79
Female	14	24.57	1.39			

TABLE 10:
RESULTS OF T-TEST ANALYSIS FOR THE POSTTEST BETWEEN MALES & FEMALES (EXPERIMENTAL GROUP)

Groups	N	M	SD	t	df	*p*
Male	12	27.71	3.08	-.21	23	.83
Female	13	28.42	3.60			

As the results in Table 9 indicate, no significant difference [*t* (24) = .27, *p* = .79 (two-tailed)] is found between males (*M* = 24.58, *SD* = 3.30) and females (*M* = 24.57, *SD* = 1.39) in control groups. In addition, the results in Table 10 show that male participants (*M* = 27.71, *SD* = 3.08) have performed similarly to female participants (*M* = 28.42, *SD* = 3.60) in experimental groups reflecting no significant difference [*t* (23) = -.21, *p* = .83 (two-tailed)].

V. Conclusions and Pedagogical Implications

As the data analysis indicated, emailing task seems to have a significant effect on the improvement of reading comprehension ability of Iranian EFL learners. It is also concluded that gender has little or no significant effect on the development of reading proficiency via web-enhance language learning (WELL) programs. Findings of the study also showed no significant difference between the participants' performances on unseen passages section of the posttest implying that the achievement in reading comprehension can be limited to reading texts practiced via emailing.

In addition, like similar researches on technology enhanced language learning (TELL) conducted by Volle, 2005; Gonglewski et al., 2001; and Li, 2000, it appears that this experience was successful in accomplishing its intended goal of providing opportunities for Iranian pre-intermediate learners to engage in sending and receiving emails for classroom reading tasks. Besides, this study seems similar to the blended programs in which traditional face to face classes and web-enhanced programs are held side by side. However, it is clear that learners who are not familiar with such a novel environment need more time to adapt themselves.

Nowadays emailing is becoming quite common among school and university students in Iran although internet connection speed and lack of expertise on the part of both students and teachers are the major drawbacks of the new innovation. Hence, emailing tasks, provided that they are designed appropriately, can be considered as an innovative approach to language learning and seems applicable to particularly private language schools. The results of this research suggest that other school subjects rather than language could also be practiced through emailing. Finally, due to the findings of this study on the prerequisite IT knowledge, it can be concluded that those learners who are more dominant and proficient net-users can benefit more from WELL/TELL.

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The Compatibility of Cultural Value in Iranian EFL Textbooks

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***Abstract*—One of the major issues in critical linguistics and language education is analyzing the ideological content of textbooks. The dialectical connection between language and culture has always been a concern of L2 teachers and educators. Therefore, in this paper, the researcher has looked for the cultural values depicted in EFL books and tried to find their influence on Iranian learners as well as, the differences between cultural and language among learners and assesses the relative importance of language. In this study, one set of textbooks - interchange series- that are taught in English language institute in Iran are analyzed. The cultural values portrayed in these books were extracted, defined and exemplified in this paper. This study depicts that new interchange series do contain cultural values. However, shows that cultural impact does not occur through one book only. On the other word, the results found by the researcher indicated that these cultural values did not influence learners studying these books differently from those who study English through another set of books.**

***Index Terms*—cultural impact, students, teacher, first language, L2**

I. Introduction

Currently, English is the most widely spoken language in the world. Due to its spread, starting with the colonization period and continuing with the economic and political power of the U.S.A., it has been used for different purposes around the world such as education, commerce, tourism, and science. People all around the world continue to learn English to reach their different aims (Kramsch, 2001).

The dialectical connection between language and culture has always been a concern of L2 teachers and educators. Whether culture of the target language is to be incorporated into L2 teaching has been a subject of rapid change throughout language teaching history. In the course of time, the pendulum of ELT practitioners' opinion has swung against or for teaching culture in context of language teaching. For example, during the first decades of the 20th century researchers discussed the importance and possibilities of including cultural components into L2 curriculum (Rajagopalan, 2004); the advent of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in the late 70s marks a critical shift for teaching culture, for the paradigm shift from an approach based largely on form and structure to a plurality of approaches causing an unintended side effect: the negligence of culture (Pulverness, 2003).

Recent studies focus on the seamless relationship between L2 teaching and target culture teaching, especially over the last decade with the writings of scholars such as Byram (1997) and Kramsch (2001). People involved in language teaching have again begun to understand the intertwined relation between culture and language (Pulverness, 2004). It has been emphasized that without the study of culture, teaching L2 is inaccurate and incomplete. For L2 students, language study seems senseless if they know nothing about the people who speak the target language or the country in which the target language is spoken. Acquiring a new language means a lot more than the manipulation of syntax and lexicon. According to Barnett (2000), "the need for cultural literacy in ELT arises mainly from the fact that most language learners, not exposed to cultural elements of the society in question, seem to encounter significant hardship in communicating meaning to native speakers". In addition, nowadays the L2 culture is presented as an interdisciplinary core in many L2 curricula designs and textbooks (Rajagopalan, 2004).

A critical question arises in terms of English language teaching at this point, that is, whether to teach 'culture' along with English or not. The question of teaching 'culture' along with English has been discussed by some scholars from the fields of applied linguistics and sociolinguistics for nearly two decades. There are four views regarding the issue. The first one states that 'target language culture' should be taught along with English to acculturate language learners into the cultures of English speaking countries (Byram, 1990; Byram & Flemming, 1998). The second view states that there should not be any teaching of the 'target language culture' together with English in the countries where English is an institutionalized variety (Kachru, 1985, 1986; Kachru & Nelson, 1996; Canagarajah, 1999). Other two views also reject the idea of teaching 'target language culture' along with English. However, while one of the views supports the teaching of 'local culture' in English language teaching (Kramsch & Sullivan, 1996; McKay, 2003b), the other view holds the position that English has become a lingua franca and it should be taught in a culture-free context (Alptekin, 2005; Jenkins, 2005; Seidlhofer, 2001). In order to explore the role of 'culture' in English language teaching, several empirical studies were conducted. However, most of the studies focus on English language teachers.

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The present study aims to investigate the cultural impact of EFL books and opinions of the Persian English language learners in English as foreign language classes.

II. Language

The first, home, or dominant language(s) of English language learners (ELLs) may vary according to multiple factors such as phonology or sound system; morphology or the way in which words are formed and used; syntax, or the way in which words and sentences are combined to produce coherent speaking or writing; and style, or the manner in which language is delivered (WIDA Consortium, 2007). The qualities and characteristics of language may vary greatly from one to another as contrasted with English; as a result, it is important to recognize that one or a combination of certain characteristics may help and/or hinder academic English development (Jenkins, 2000).

Language as defined by Cook (1999) is a system of human communication. This system of communication is used to convey needs, requirements, requests, wishes, desires and ideas. It is through this system that people come into contact with each other emotionally and culturally and exchange their needs and points of view.

However, it should not be forgotten that people are not the same under their skin. Even if they do look alike, people tend to have different points of view, they tend to look at the same things but have entirely different perceptions (Freeman, David and Yvonne, 2004). This is because different people have different worldviews. They see the world differently and parse in accordingly.

Due to this difference in outlooks, people see the world and truth differently. It is language, which gives voice to ideas and outlooks, and hence through language, the differences become known and apparent. It is through language that through is verbalized, and again it is through language that ideas or points of view can be conveyed and proven for others to accept (Jenkins, 2005).

Such a phenomenon is widely and frequently seen in courts. Someone has committed a crime and his/her lawyer is paid to prove otherwise. The outlook on the issue is changed, the whole incident is looked at from another angle, and, therefore, the truth is distorted. The instrument used to carry out the above scenario is language. Therefore, it can be said language is manipulated to sentence the accused or set him/her free. Therefore, language is a very powerful tool, if in the hands of a master, to influence those who are at the receiving end (Freeman et. al., 2004).

This powerful tool, language, is learned by infants all over the world and by a lot of adolescents and adults. A second language is usually learned by adults and adolescents in a classroom with a book and the help of a teacher.

Mankind is and has always been a gregarious creature. Life has always been lived in societies since antiquity. This is the life that mankind is made for. However, in order to live such a life in peace there should be some laws and regulations that will ensure harmony and uniformity in the society. These laws and regulations are recognized in the form of cultural. Culture is a set of beliefs, attitudes, customs, behaviour and social habits of a community (Richards et al., 1992). Thus, culture is the glue that blinds the community together. In this paper that is used for learning a language were also implemented specific ideas, values and points of view; this phenomenon will be delved into in this study.

III. Culture

"Culture" in the contemporary teaching of languages included these aspects, but much more attention is paid to the everyday lifestyle of ordinary and the values, beliefs and prejudices they share with their fellows within their linguistics and social group, with due attention to intergroup differences. Culture establishes for each person a context of cognitive and affective behaviour, a blueprint for personal and social existence. But, tend to perceive reality strictly within the context of our own culture; this is reality that we have created, not necessarily objective reality, if needed there is any such thing as objectivity in its ultimate sense (Kramsch, 2001).

Culture as defined by Llurda (2004) is synonymous with the "ways of the people". More often than not the ways of a people are praised by that same people while looked upon with suspicion or disapproval by the others, and often in both cases with surprisingly little understanding of what those ways really are and mean. Llurda assumed that cultures are structured systems of patterned behaviours.

Llurda (2004) contended that we couldn't hope to compare two cultures unless we have more accurate understanding of each of the cultures being compared. We must be able to eliminate the things we claim to do but actually don't do. We must be able to describe the things we do without being conscious of doing them, and we must make sure we are able to describe practice accurately, not haphazardly, and we must be able to describe the situations in which we do what we do.

IV. Comparison of Cultures

If the native culture habits are transferred when learning a foreign culture, it is obvious that, by comparing the two culture systems, the troubles spots will be predictable. This is of course a huge undertaking. Llurda (2004)) presented a few examples to facilitate cultural analysis and comparison such as follows: a) same form, different meaning, b) same meaning, different form, and c) same form, same meaning, different distribution.

The notion filtered through the above types of misinformation and through others becomes part of the native culture as its 'correct' view of the reality of the foreign one, and as young members grow up they receive these views as truth

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through verbal reports and all the other vehicles of enculturation. These preconceived notions constitute very serious obstacles to the understanding of another culture (Jenkins, 2000, 2005).

V. Language and Culture

The native language is learned along with the ways and attitudes of the social group, and these ways and attitudes find expression through the language. In this way the language is an integral part of the functioning social system. The psychologist Osgood (1957 as cited in Modiano, 2001) set out a theory of language "meaning" which maintains that the full meaning of words for individuals is the result of the sum total of experiences they have had with those words in the environment in which they learned them. Since members of a cultural group have had similar experiences, the meaning of a word is shared by them all, but it may differ in certain respects from the meaning this word has for other groups. It is because of this interrelationship of language and culture that one-to-one equivalences can rarely be established between words and expressions in two languages, once one has passed beyond the stage of physical identification of objects. Even here there will be divergences, as the speakers of one language will have identified certain criteria attributes and categories, according to their environmental needs, which may not correspond with the attributes and categories of another language. As Cummins, (2000) stated that "each language lays down its boundaries within the amorphous 'thought-mass' and stresses different factors in it in different arrangements, puts the centres of gravity in different places and gives them different emphases". McKay (2003) contends that culture influences language teaching in two ways, linguistic and pedagogical. Linguistically, it affects the semantic, pragmatic and discourse levels of the language. Pedagogically, it influences the choice of the language materials because cultural content of the language materials and the cultural basis of the teaching methodology are to be taken into consideration while deciding upon the language materials. For example, while some textbooks provide examples from the target culture, some others use source culture materials.

A. Attitudes toward Other Cultures

One of the major hurdles to the successful implementation of culture goals in language classes revolves around attitudes. Before students can learn about culture, they must be receptive to the concept of learning about cultures other than their own (Alptekin, 2002). Often the teacher has to break down cultural barriers prior to initiating teaching learning activities designed to accomplish cultural goals. One way to begin teaching culture on a positive note is to emphasize similarities among people. From this beginning, the students can move to a discussion of differences among members of their family and among families, schools and cultures. This approach stresses that similarities are presented in all cultures and that differences in the expression of these similarities are natural (Chastain, 1988). Chastain (1988) examined attitudes towards culture form three perspective:

B. Society

The students' environment exerts a tremendous influence on their receptivity to the learning of cultural concepts. If the students are from a society that is cosmopolitan and they are familiar with cultural diversity, they will be more ready to study and benefit from cultural content (Hofstede, Geert and Hofstede, 2005). On the other hand, students who are products of a rather closed society will probably have less interest in other cultures and subcultures. Teachers should take societal factors into consideration when selecting culture goals and culture content. What can be done will be determined by the local situation. The paradox is that those students most in need of developing cultural awareness and cultural sensitivities are normally those who are least disposed toward these goals (Chastain, 1988).

C. Teachers

The attitude of the teacher is a crucial factor in determining the extent to which cultural objectives are attained. If she expects all the students to love the second culture as much as she does, she is certain to be disappointed. If she attempts to indoctrinate the students with attitudes form the second culture, she will most likely be rejected by the majority of her students. If she attempts to criticize the students' own culture, she may arouse negative, counterproductive feeling. In short, the teacher should not insist that the students emulate her own affinity for and commitment to the second culture, as much as she may be predisposed to do so. The teacher's task is to make students aware of cultural differences, not pass value judgments on those differences. She is to acquaint, not indoctrinate (Chastain, 1988).

Kang (1992) emphasized this point by saying, "to understand another set of rules for living does not necessarily mean that old patterns are wrong and to be rejected. To do so may mean a loss of cultural identify and regulation to the permanent status of the marginal stranger everywhere".

Obviously, students are more familiar with their own culture than any other and they prefer it. This attitude is normal and healthy because they, like everyone else, need to identify themselves with some cultural group. Kang (1992) expressed that this basic need as follows: "Ethnocentrism, or adherence to a given set of cultural options adjudged right, is a natural and necessary human attitude".

D. Students

Ethnocentrism has often been painted in negative terms, but such a reaction is not entirely justified (Chastain, 1988). Each individual must make choices as to the desire-able behaviour patterns by which his life is most comfortable and

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most productive. In modern society, most individuals do not maintain in unaltered form all the cultural patterns of their parents, but neither is it possible for any individual to divorce himself entirely from his cultural heritage (McDevitt, 2004). To exist as a socio-cultural entity all cultures must, by definition, conform to some system of shared beliefs and behaviour patterns. To the extent to which anyone deviates from the native culture patterns depends on the individual. From both the individual and societal points of view, ethnocentrism has its good aspects and it's bad. When the critics decry ethnocentrism, they are actually referring to the myopic extreme that refuses to consider any viewpoint other than that of its own culture (Garcia, 2002).

VI. Statement of the Problem

Research on the relationship between education, ideology and power has become one of the most important subjects in the field of critical linguistics and language education (Baik and Shim, 1997). Apple (1993) discussed how the school curriculum serves as the medium through which socially accepted knowledge is propagated, regulated and legitimized. In this discussion, he equates the process of education with the accumulation of legitimized knowledge. The goal of education, then, is seen as the attainment of power that can be translated as the right to 'name the world'(Apple, 1993).

Apple (1993) further went on to assert that the contents of the educational curriculum of any nation or society are made up of "official knowledge" that has been selected by specific groups within the society whose accumulated power of knowledge enables them "to help select the formal corpus of school knowledge" (Apple, 1993). In Foucault's (1980) terms, such as educational curriculum would constitute the core of that which is considered as the 'regime of truth' for any given nation or society. Other scholars (Fiske, Hodge & Turner, 1987) have pointed out that 'culture' acts as the medium of "a procedure and reproducer of value systems and power relations". However, it is also questionable whether language education materials should be absolutely free of ideological content and cultural values, and whether it is even possible to completely take out ideology or culture from language textbooks. Most nations adopt some kind of national curriculum and it is usually designed to promote the ideals that the people of the nation share. Saravanan (1995) stated that, in Singapore, education is an instrument to socialize school going children to create identification and commitment for social cohesion.

Therefore, the problem to be considered is not whether there are values in language teaching materials, but what kind of value is portrayed in them, whether these values influence the language learners and how teachers handle culture in their classroom. The purpose of this study is to try to find out what this tool comprises besides "a system of sounds and structure". It has become clear that the present study is going to analyze the Institute Books. This analysis will determine the cultural value portrayed in these books. In order to find the cultural values in EFL textbooks in Iran and their impact on the users of such books, the following objectives have been raised:

1. What cultural values exist in Institute textbooks (New-Interchange I) taught in Iran?
2. What cultural values exist in Institute textbooks (New-Interchange II) taught in Iran?
3. What cultural values exist in Institute textbooks (New-Interchange III) taught in Iran?

VII. Method and Procedure

This study is a critical linguistic study of EFL books in which were employed to teach English in some private English language institute in Iran. With roots in communication studies, content analysis focuses on the characteristics of materials and asks "What meaning is reflected in these?" Content or document analysis is a kind of qualitative research method applied to written or visual materials for the purpose of identifying specified characteristics of the material. The materials analysed can be textbooks, newspapers, web pages, speeches, advertisements, musical compositions or any of a host other type documents. In this study, in order to find the cultural values one series book was chosen as an instrument. This book was the New Interchange series in which comprise three books: new interchange I, new interchange II and new interchange III that each of them comprises 130 pages approximately and have a workbook, as well. These textbooks were read and analyzed to find out the clash of cultural values; the abbreviations of the book's name are as follows: N.I 1: New Interchange I, N.I 2: New interchange II, and N.I 3: New Interchange III.

These books were scrutinized for the cultural values they held. These cultural values were then collected and their frequency of occurrences noted down. At this stage, it became apparent what cultural values are portrayed in such books. To clarify the meaning of each of cultural values is needed a definition is given for each cultural value so for determining the clash of cultural value Thompson framework is applied. In Thompson's (1984) framework of analysis, the concept that links education and power relation is 'ideology', which he defined as "the ways in which meaning serves to sustain relations of domination". A brief outline of the cultural values - based on Thompson (1984) rubrics- included in these books will be given to provide the bigger picture and later the values explained in detail as follows:

Outline of cultural values

1. Hegemony of English which has to do with English speaking countries.
2. Consumerism

2.1. Entertainment

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3. Personal Issues
3.1. Personal characteristics and vales
3.2. Health
3.2.1 Physiological health
3.2.2 Psychological health and family relationships
4. Social issues
4.1. Education
4.2. Equality of sexes
4.3. Non-Islamic values

VIII. Result & Discussion

The critical linguistic analysis of the EFL books gave rise to a set of values that were found in these books. Some of these values were similar to the values held in the Iranian society and some were different. In order to answer the "what cultural values exist in English textbooks written abroad and taught in Iran?" and to clarify the meaning of each of these values, a definition is given for each cultural value.

The analysis was carried out and the cultural values in EFL books were found. These books have inside them many cultural values that are explained in details. The frequency of the cultural values in each of the books analyzed is presented based on alphabetic order in the following table.

The cultural values portrayed in these sets of EFL books are found. Now, when one of these books was taught the learners, teachers and program developers will know what the learner is learning other than language or through the language.

A close look at the outline of cultural values will show that these values have to do with Iranian everyday life. Incidents that happen to each of people every day and are a part of their lives, therefore, they are very realistic and can be used and may become part of the learners' value system.

One of the main values found is "Hegemony of English". What this means is that everything that has to do with the English language and the countries in which English is spoken is considered superior. In these books, the main example of such a situation is England. As it can be seen, England, the English language, English cooking, and English way of life are all depicted as superior.

It is needless to say that the English are a very shrewd and clever people and don't conquer the world through power. They have thought of subtle means to do so. One way is the one that can be seen in such books. The learners are taught very cleverly an indirectly that whatever is English is good. The learners is so busy learning the language that's/he doesn't stop to question the content of the book, s/he accepts what is written and passes on. This knowledge therefore, becomes part of his/her value system (Santa Ana, 2004).

This can also be realized in the reaction of people all around the world to Western countries and especially England. People all around the world, particularly, from the developing nations have a conception that life in the Western World is synonyms with heaven. This idea has been formed through the picture given by such countries given by such countries and by the Western countries have presented themselves. When all the people who want to immigrate are taken into account it is seen that the presentation has worked and the conception has truly been formed in the minds of these people and they aren't few in number, but very numerous and therefore, it can be said that the technique was successful.

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TABLE.I.
CULTURAL VALUES FOUND IN NEW INTERCHANGE SERIES

Cultural Value	Frequency		
	N.I. 1	N.I. 2	N.I. 3
Charity	-	1	1
Consumerism	1	1	1
Divorce	1	-	-
Education	-	-	2
Environmental Awareness	-	-	2
Exercise	4	-	-
Family Relation	-	1	1
Fashion	2	-	-
Film Industry	2	3	2
Friendship	-	-	2
Hard Work	1	4	2
Health	3	1	-
Holidaymaking	7	7	-
Honesty	-	1	-
Innovation	-	1	-
Music Library	2	-	-
Non-Islamic Value	-	1	2
Planning	1	-	-
Punctuality	-	-	1
Raising Children	-	-	1
Respecting the Law	-	-	1
Responsibility	-	1	-
Risk Taking	-	-	1
Smoking	-	1	-
Television	2	-	-
Valuing Experience	-	-	2
Wealth	-	1	-
Working Women	1	-	-

The second most frequent value that is presented is consumerism. In today's world where a saying goes, "Work, Buy, Consume, Die", this is a very just value. The human race has become a mechanism, the utmost of happiness in the world today is to be able to work, make a lot of money, buy, use and die somewhere in this loop, while you have done nothing else with your life (Pulverness, 2004). People have become nuts and bolts in the huge economics machine. And if this machine is to work well, people have to be trained to be a part of it.

The third and forth cultural values have to do with personal and social concerns. These are concerned with those issues which people face every day of their lives. In this part, the book tries to give awareness about different concerns of everyday life. For example, matters relating to health are very information and may be very helpful for the learner who doesn't have any information about them. Different approaches to child-raising are discussed as well which can be very enlightening.

It is needless to say that such values depict the way of life of the target culture and aren't necessarily similar to the way Iranian see the world. It is life seen through the eyes of other people who don't necessarily look at life as we do.

The social concerns in these books are a bit different from Iran. For example, there are values that were named Non-Islamic values. These cultural values are entirely different from the values Iranian hold as a way of life. These values are not accepted in Iran as the norm of the society. Understandably, lots of parents do not like to expose their children to cultural values so different from their own, when the child is not fully grown and his/her children be brought up with the cultural values held in their own native society. However, parents see these EFL books as teaching their children what they would not like them to learn.

IX. Conclusion

Culture has always been a part of human life and it is the invisible net that binds human beings together. Culture, just like language is an abstract phenomenon. Other than this commonality these two concepts are intertwined and it can be said that language is a vehicle of realization for culture.

In today's world English has become the international language and the language of technology. Therefore, native speakers of all other language feel a need to learn English if they want to survive in today's world. This learning of English may vary from one or two years to many more years so that the learners can acquire proficiency in the language. Needless to say, besides learning the language, the learners are also learning the culture of the target language being learnt. This target language in most cases is English. Therefore, the learner is becoming acquainted with the cultural values held and practiced in the society in which English is spoken. However, the question arises as to whether these values do influence the learners of the language or not. This research strived to find the cultural values portrayed in EFL books in Iran and the next step was to see if these values influenced the learners to create what is called cultural impact.

In the next step, as already explained in the previous parts, the researcher has investigated for the cultural values depicted in EFL books and tried to find their influence on Iranian learners. The results indicated that these cultural

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values did not influence learners studying these books differently from those who study English through another set of books. As a matter of fact those learners who study English through the books published by the Ministry of Education were similar in their cultural system to those who had studied English through New Interchange.

Consequently, the results found by the researcher are interesting and comforting to those who are worried about their children's cultural values. This is very good news to those people who worry about the phenomenon of cultural attack. They can now rest assured that this doesn't happen through English textbooks. Of course, if English textbooks are accompanied by other means of foreign input that would be another questions, for other researchers to answer. This study has worked on books teaching English and learners of English, therefore, it has some ideas to add to the field and some implications for TEFL.

X. Implication

In Iran as an Islamic country, at the moment there is a lot of worry about the phenomenon of cultural impact and the stronger version; cultural attack. This is because the cultural values which as an Islamic society live with are very different from those which Western Countries live by. One of the main worries of many parents and the elders of our society is that children will be influenced by the cultural values portrayed in books designed by writers living in foreign countries and holding other culture values.

This study, however, shows that cultural impact does not occur through one book only. If these cultural values are presented in one book which is used for teaching English it does not become part of the learners' belief system, therefore, there is no cause for worry. Those people who want to preserve Islamic culture can rest assured that foreign books will not higher with their work.

This study shows that new interchange series do contain cultural values. This presentation of values is done in s subtle and clever way. This can be a good model. When syllabus designers and material developers start planning books which include cultural values, they can take this possibility into account.

On the other hand, if look at foreign books without bias, will see that there are positive values from our point of view, as well. Therefore, the learners in Iran can be encouraged to learn the positive values depicted in these books. These can be values such as perseverance, planning and problem solving. When make sure that those books will not harm learners, teachers, society and culture; can be then start to employ them to improve learners life.

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Dynamic Assessment in Perspective: Demarcating Dynamic and Non-dynamic Boundaries

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***Abstract*—Ever since the concept of dynamic assessment (also DA) was introduced into the literature on language pedagogy, it has received various interpretations in terms of its scope, meaning, purpose, and even its practical realization. This difference in interpretation, the *raison d'âre* of DA, however, has resulted in a burgeoning variation in the number and types of procedures and practices employed in L2 classrooms under DA programs, a fact which seems to have gone unnoticed by both the critics and advocates of DA approaches to L2. The present article, therefore, tries to define DA within the very conceptual framework it was originally introduced and to sketch the theoretical and practical scopes which serve to realize that framework. To this end, this article provides an account of the basic tenets and principles underlying DA and also examines the degree to which each of the major approaches to DA have realized those basic principles in practice.**

***Index Terms*—dynamic assessment, zone of proximal development, socio-cultural theory of learning, mediated learning experience, modifiability**

I. Introduction

The turn of the century is marked with changes in the theoretical and practical orientations in educational settings including language pedagogy. Such changes, among other things, have provoked modifications in the classroom procedures in a systematic way. One of the most important reconsiderations (at least in theory) came about in reaction to classic assessment procedures which had dominated (and still keep on dominating) educational settings worldwide.

Until very recently, static psychometric assessment procedures and techniques were utilized as most reliable means of yielding valid results on specific abilities of learners, and the obtained measures were considered not only as an indication of the current status of the learners' abilities but as predictors of the learners' future courses of action. The problem lay in the fact that such interpretations were made on the basis of only one or two summative assessments (e.g. achievement tests) which, in practice, turned out to yield undependable results.

Through the introduction of new trends in the field of educational psychology, such as sociocultural theory of learning, zone of proximal development and structural cognitive modifiability (Feuerstein, Rand, & Hoffman,1979; Feuerstein, Rand, Hoffman, & Miller, 1980; Feuerstein, Rand, & Rynders, 1988; Feuerstein, Falik, Rand, & Feuerstein, 2003), a novel orientation towards assessment and instruction began to receive warm welcome from different disciplines, including applied linguistics, which ultimately led to a new approach to assessment and instruction known as *dynamic assessment*.

Unlike traditional psychometric approaches to assessment, DA capitalized on instruction during the assessment itself – it tapped into the pedagogical function of assessment in providing opportunities for learning to occur.

Moreover, while prediction had been traditionally thought to be a function peculiar to prognostic assessments, proponents of DA believed that one type of prediction – learners' future development – is something that any sound assessment should be able to make. This prognostic aspect of assessment, they argued, is not meaningful unless the learner's performance is mediated by a tutor-examiner. These basic tenets derived from the concept of the *zone of proximal development* introduced by the Russian psychologist Lev Vygotsky who insisted that any assessment must, among other things, include a specification of the degree to which the testee's performance is modifiable. The extent to

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which modifications can be made indicates the zone of proximal development or the person's potential learning capacity in future.

Despite this clarity in theory and practice, DA has been subject to distinct and sometimes even conflicting interpretations with, in some extreme cases, little if any correspondence to the original assumptions or principles. This study, therefore, has taken up the express objective of providing a working definition for dynamic assessment so that models proposed under DA elsewhere could be critically analyzed and evaluated. To this end, we first scrutinize the basic assumptions and principles underlying DA and then examine the existing approaches to DA against them. The degree to which each of those approaches conforms to the basic principles and conceptualizations of the theory is an index of the construct validity of that approach. This focus is largely motivated by the fact that there are a number of approaches to dynamic assessment which seem to be only superficially, and by no means theoretically, related to DA's assumptions and procedures (Sternberg & Grigorenko, 2002); approaches which are indeed assessment techniques disguised as DA such as formative assessments or assessment procedures developed based on views rooted in Piaget's cognitive constructivism.

II. Dynamic Assessment: Principles and Assumptions

A. Zone of Proximal Development

Dynamic assessments were developed as a means of realizing the concept of the zone of proximal development introduced by Vygotsky in his social constructivistic theory of learning. According to him, learners' performance level, their developmental scheme, is two-fold: their current level of development and their potential level of development or, in Vygotsky's (1962) words, the "zone of present development" and the "zone of proximal development" (ZPD), respectively. The former pertains to learners' existing ability to display a performance level without external assistance; the latter connotes the extent to which learners can move away from this existing performance level towards the one developed under guidance and assistance. ZPD, then, can be defined as "the distance between current developmental level achieved without assistance and the level of potential development ascertained through guidance" (Dorfler, Golke, & Artlet, 2009, p.77).

B. Dynamic Assessment: Definitions

It is apparent that the key feature in the concept of ZPD is the amount of change in the performance of learners as a result of assistance received from more capable and informed individuals, the so-called *mediators* or *tutor-examiners*, who offer mediations, ranging from prompts and hints through prefabricated or spontaneous questions and explanations. The goal is to modify learners' performance level in order to enable the mediators not only to understand individual learners' current level of abilities but to predict (assess) their unassisted potential future abilities based on their present performance in assisted (instructed) completion task settings.

The question which arises immediately is whether these very assumptions have been incorporated into definitions given for DA, notwithstanding the inevitable differences in wordings.

Dorfler et al (2009) have defined DA as "one approach to gaining insight into the current level of competence as well as into how this competence can be influenced by specific educational interventions" (p. 77).

Lussier and Swanson (2005) define dynamic assessment as a "procedure that attempts to modify performance, via examiners' assistance, in an effort to understand learning potential" (p. 66).

Lidz (1991) defines dynamic assessment as "an approach that follows a test–intervene–retest format, and that focuses on learner modifiability and on producing suggestions for interventions that appear successful in facilitating improved learner performance" (p. 6).

Poehner (2008) has provided the following definition: "active collaboration with individuals simultaneously reveals the full range of their abilities and promotes their development. In educational contexts, this means that assessment – understanding learners' abilities – and instruction – supporting learner development – are a dialectically integrated activity. This pedagogical approach has come to be known as Dynamic Assessment" (p. 2).

Adopting the common features of these definitions, dynamic assessment could be viewed as a complex of procedures around the task of *modifying* learners' performances via tutor-examiners' assistance in an effort to yield information as to the potential development of the testees in future.

However, this concept of modifiability seems to have been conceptualized and defined in different ways in the definitions given above, where the means of making modifications (collaboration as opposed to intervention) and assessing them (pretest-posttest difference as opposed to within-test-measures) are quite different. Such differences have given rise to distinct approaches to DA since its inception in the early 1970s and, at the same time, to a controversy over the legitimacy of such approaches and even over the validity of the construct itself.

Meanwhile, in some educational and research settings formative assessments and Piaget's cognitive constructivist views about assessment have been wrongly equated with and/or interpreted as dynamic assessments.

Since the concept of modifiability has proven problematic at the outset, the next section tries to capture the essence of the concept by explicating it within the conceptual framework within which it was originally introduced.

C. Modifiability: Stability of Change and Learners' Learning Potential

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Modifiability is viewed in DA as the main feature characterizing a learner's zone of proximal development (Kozulin & Garb, 2002; Lidz & Elliott, 2000). As mentioned earlier, DA embraces the assumption that any assessment must include a specification of the degree to which the testee's performance is modifiable. The extent of modifiability is an indicator of the ZPD or the person's potential learning capacity in future. The important point about modifiability, however, is its stability. Stability of the modified behavior is an essential factor in determining the future development of the learners. This point has been eloquently made by Luria where, dynamic assessment, according to her "argues that a full picture requires two additional bits of information: the person's performance with assistance from someone else and the extent to which the person can benefit from this assistance not only in completing the same task or test, but in transferring this mediated performance to different tasks or tests" (cited in Poehner and Lantolf, 2005, p. 234).

It follows that, with adequate stability in the modified performance, parts of the learning process can actually be completed within the zone of proximal (i.e. emerging) development; that is, what learners can do today with help and resources, they can most probably do in future on their own. Within the ZPD, then, the goal is to establish the amount of change that can be induced during interactions with the examiner during the assessment process; that is why DA is sometimes referred to as "assessment by teaching" as opposed to "assessment while teaching" (Newman, Griffin, & Cole, 1989). This interpretation captures the essence of the express goal of DA: "to unify assessment and instruction into a single activity the goal of which is learner development" (Poehner & Lantolf, 2005, p. 254).

However, as mentioned earlier, the ways in which modifiability has been conceptualized within ZPD, along with a number of other factors, has led to distinct interpretations or different approaches to DA. The remainder of this paper represents an account of these distinct conceptualizations and examines them against the principles discussed above. Finally a definition for DA is proposed which will hopefully conceptualize the construct and its components in harmony with the principles specified earlier here in this paper.

III. DA: Interactionist or Interventionist?

The quantitative interpretation of modifiability in ZPD capitalizes on the psychometric notion of 'difference score': the measured difference between what testees could do on their own and what they could do with help and assistance. In this kind of interpretation, typical of test-teach-retest designs, the zone of learners' proximal development is quantitatively computed as the difference between the learners' performances before and after treatment, that is, the difference, in number, between the scores obtained before remedial instruction (instructor's intervention) and those obtained after it as a result of exerted modifications. That is why this approach is called a quantitative interventionist approach or simply an interventionist approach.

Once compared against the definition given above for DA, however, quantitative interventionist approaches turn out to lack construct validity in that they do not conform to the basic assumptions underlying dynamic assessments. In other words, interventionist approaches do not practically realize what they purportedly claim to be the beating heart of DA in general and ZPD in particular: to yield information as to the potential development of the testees in future. What they supply is neither the result of *assistance under assessment conditions*, as the two take place quite independently, nor the consequence of *assessing the ability to transfer the mediated performance beyond the immediate task to others*. In other words, what they yield is again no more than the zone of the learners' present development, the information which is already obtainable without DA. The main reason for these flaws may lie in the means and the methods of obtaining information as they are all psychometric in nature, demanding independent means of instruction and assessment.

In test-teach-retest, a common interventionist design, for example, the tutor-examiner's assistance is not provided at the time of assessment but when learners are receiving instructions in typical teacher-centered classroom settings. Also in another interventionist design, graduated prompting, though assistance is in synchrony with assessment, it is not aimed at any modifications in learner performance meaning that mediation actually will not result in any changes as the time allocated to both mediation and prompting is not long enough to allow for any changes; by the same token, assessing a learners' ability in transferring an intact behavior is but misleading and fruitless. Moreover, the immediate needs of learners are not revealed as they have almost no roles in the process of constructing the reality, where learners are all seen as comparable against a pre-established menu of hints and rank-scale labels in a passive fashion.

A qualitative interactionist DA, on the other hand, puts a qualitative interpretation on ZPD; instead of *measuring* or *rating (on scales)* existing learning abilities of the examinees, typical of interventionists, interactionists conceive of DA as "a means of gaining insight into the kinds of psychological processes that the [learner] might be capable of displaying in the next or proximal phase of development and a means of identifying the kinds of instruction, or assistance that will be required if the [learner] is to realize these potentials" (Minick,1987, p. 127).

Feuerstein *et al* (1988; 2003) have introduced an interactionist model which is based on two interrelated hypotheses. The first hypothesis, known as the theory of structural cognitive modifiability, strongly supports the position held by Vygotsky that our cognitive abilities are constructed by sociocultural interaction and instruction. This permeability to external, but relevant, phenomena results in variant sociocognitive structures "depending on the presence and the quality of appropriate forms of interaction and instruction" (Feuerstein et al., 1988, p. 5). This last assertion about interaction and instruction brings up the second hypothesis, the so-called mediated learning experience (MLE) according to which the examinee's performance is mediated by an adult mediator who provides the examinees with instructions needed to successfully accomplish the administered problem solving tasks and who is to record afterwards

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the kinds of instruction, assistance and modifications required for the examinee's successful transfer of assisted (or mediated) learning experience – the use of relevant psychological processes – into other unassisted contexts of use, that is, the desired structural cognitive change. Feuerstein defines MLE as "a process through which environmental stimuli do not impact directly on the organism but are filtered through some other person" (2003, p. 240).

Of the MLE components defined so far (Feuerstein et al, 1988, 1980, & 1979) three of them are directly relevant to second language learning in educational settings: intentionality, reciprocity and transcendence.

Intentionality, the most important of the three, is the component which best materializes the basic assumption underlying ZPD, namely the tutor-examiner's *deliberate* mediation of the material to be learned by the learners. As the definition speaks for itself, it is used to stand in total contrast to occasional, incidental mediation typical of classic instructor-learner relationships where instructors' interventions mostly take place in a haphazard unsystematic manner. Such mediation, if any, would hardly result in any development; nor would it lead to any dependable prediction about the examinees' potential (future) development which, as mentioned earlier, is the express goal of ZPD.

The second component, *Reciprocity*, underscores the significance of a mutual involvement of both the learner and the instructor in the construction of the intended cognitive structure. This interaction is, again, inevitable, if, according to ZPD, a fully-fledged transferable learning (Transcendence; the third component) is to take place. Reciprocity serves to realize the premises asserted within the other two components so that its absence will culminate in a distortion of the whole picture as it fails to take account of the ZPD. This point has almost gone unnoticed by the proponents of interventionist approaches to DA as the tutor-examiner is already equipped with pre-established sequences of questions and cues during the teaching phase where the learner is merely considered as a passive recipient of the prescriptive mediations. Interactionists (e.g. Feuerstein et al, 1979), on the other hand, are more flexible and interactive offering different types of mediation depending on specific needs revealed by the student during the assessment, one more reason for lending credence to interactionist approaches.

Transcendence, as the third component, materializes the ultimate goal of the mediated learning, namely that of transferring what a learner can do with assistance now, beyond the immediate task and context to other tasks and contexts of use in as varied orders as possible to meet the demands of the new conditions. When this is attained cognitive development can be claimed to have occurred as well.

IV. DA: Social Constructivism or Cognitive Constructivism?

The principles and procedures in DA rely heavily on the theoretical assumptions highlighted in Vygotsky's zone of proximal development. What is unique about Vygotsky's theory is its adherence to developmental psychology, on the one hand, and sociocultural theories of learning, on the other, in a dialectic fashion. This has also gone unnoticed in a number of interpretations, leading to models and approaches that share little, if any, with assumptions and realizations highlighted earlier in ZPD-based DA programs. The problem then lies in the deviations from Vygotsky's theory as a result of imposing upon it interpretations which indeed do not conform to its original theoretical and practical make up. In some treatments of DA (e.g. Yunian, & Ness, 1999; Budoff, 1987), it has been wrongly equated with the concept of *ongoing evaluation*, after Piaget's underscoring a step-wise incremental evaluation of developmental stages in learners as the most legitimate gauge of their potentialities. While such interpretations could bear practical pedagogic implications in L2 settings, they are, however, drawn more from Piagetian purely cognitive developmental psychology than Vygotskian sociocognitive developmental psychology, where only the latter captures the essence of the heart of DA. Hence, a brief account of the two standpoints follows so that lines of demarcation between the two theoretical positions could be adequately sketched.

Both Piaget and Vygotsky were developmental psychologists and shared a lot in their views about learning and human cognitive system in general. They, however, differed in the weight they attached to environmental factors and the role they assigned to other interlocutors in the process of cognitive development and hence learning of individual learners. While Piaget conceived of linguistic development as a phenomenon which depends on and originates from cognitive development, Vygotsky believed that "Social interaction, through language, is a prerequisite to cognitive development" (Brown, 2007, p. 43).

Piaget claimed that language acquisition is subordinate to concept acquisition and that this acquisition of concepts or knowledge about the world is based on an underlying cognitive structure which consists of a number of schemata (general potentialities to engage in a class of overt or covert actions) available at any given time to interact with the physical environment. To him, then, language learning is one among a number of aspects of the more general cognitive process of concept acquisition.

In Piaget's system the cognitive structure and its schemata result from biological maturation and cumulative experience, which are both in turn bound to the individual learners and are thus intrapersonal. In the first place, maturational processes not only account for the organism's [Piaget's own terminology] innate ability to interact with the environment, but also for the stage-wise increase in learning abilities. These schemata determine the organism's initial experiences and set bounds on their interactions with the environment, i.e., on what can be assimilated by the organism (Hergenhahn & Olsen, 1993).

At different stages of life, an organism is able to respond to the environment according to its cognitive structure. However, the way an organism is able to interact with its environment changes over time. In other words, encounter

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with new environmental phenomena leads to a change in the number of schemata available to the organism in its cognitive structure. Hence a new process is called for to account for the organism's intellectual gap. This cognitive process is called *accommodation* which is the process by which the cognitive structure is modified.

The driving force behind this modification or intellectual growth, according to Piaget (cited in Hergenhahn & Olsen, 1993), is a kind of innate tendency, within all organisms, to create a harmonious relationship (maximal adaptation or balance) between themselves and their environment. This innate tendency to organize one's experiences to assure optimal adaptation is called *equilibrium* or cognitive balance. Also, Piaget believed that learning (accommodation) depends on failure of previous knowledge to allow for assimilation of an experience. This gap or failure is what Piaget considered as an optimal condition for learning. In other words, optimal learning takes place if and only if the information or stimuli presented can be assimilated into the organism's present cognitive structure though at the same time it should be different enough to allow for a change in that structure. If schemata radically change through accommodation, resulting in a new mode of thinking, a *stage* is said to have formed.

Vygotsky shares the same views with Piaget as far as biological maturation, schemes, and the processes of assimilation and accommodation are concerned. They differ, however, with respect to the extent to which such means and processes are generalizable (common) across all species, the roles attributed to environmental factors including social beings in facilitating assimilations and accomodations, and the way the term *modifiability* is conceptualized.

Regarding Piaget's cognitive development theory of constructivism and its generalizability across all 'organisms' (Piaget's own word), the theory seems to be too simplistic in that the term 'organism' is used for animals, plants, and human beings interchangeably. In other words, Piaget considers innate differences in species' biological blueprints as the major source of differences observed in their abilities and the level of complexities in their behavior.

Also he ignores 'socialization' in general and 'instruction' in particular as two main environmental factors contributing to the individuals' learning and formation of more complex cognitive structures. He contends, instead, that human beings are different in their learning potentialities defined in terms of their IQ levels as well as their experience (Hergenhahn & Olsen, 1993). Likewise, modifiability is conceptualized as a totally intrinsically-directed phenomenon which is determined and brought about by an organism's systematic stages of development available in different degrees of complexity in accordance with the nature of the organism.

Vygotsky, on the other hand, discards not only the generalizability which characterized Piaget's learning theory, but the passivity of the environmental factors in the process of scheme transitions (Wertsch, 1985). Rather, he conceived of socialization as the unique feature of human learning which marks the major difference between humans and other creatures. To him, for a development to take place, an individual's independent processing of the input, as Piaget views it, to successfully accommodate his mental structures (scheme), is neither sufficient nor reasonable (Murphy, 2008).

As for language learning, for example, Vygotsky (1962, 1978) believed that to account for the appropriateness of the linguistic input, given the limitations associated with learners (for both L1 and L2 learning) in processing the data as well as the peculiarities involved in the acquisition of a second language, consideration of socialization and instruction is of utmost significance and inevitable. Replacing the concept of *scheme* with that of the 'zone of proximal development', he contended that the difference between a learner's ability to perform a task alone and cooperatively with an instructor hinges on the fact that social interaction facilitates internalization of the input. In other words, although Vygotsky regarded second language learning as primarily a self-regulating process, he held that optimal learning does not occur unless a social interaction between the self and more experienced members of the community (a concomitance of self and socially-controlled instruction or mediation) takes place.

It follows that the concept of the zone of proximal development must be interpreted within a broader sociopsychological context, i.e. Vygotsky's theory of Social Development. According to this theory, social interaction plays a central role in the development of cognition – full cognitive development requires social interaction; thus, cognitive development succeeds social interaction opportunities. Social interaction is defined as the amount of adult guidance or peer collaboration upon which ZPD is arrived at. The extent to which development occurs in such a social interaction exceeds what can be attained alone (Lantolf, & Poehner, 2004). Vygotsky laid the foundation of his theory on his experiments with children concluding that "Every function in the child's cultural development appears twice: first, on the social level, and later, on the individual level; first, between people (interpsychological) and then inside the child (intrapsychological). This applies equally to voluntary attention, to logical memory, and to the formation of concepts. All the higher functions originate as actual relationships between individuals"(Vygotsky, 1978, p. 58).

In light of the above, upon reflection on the two positions held by Piaget and Vygotsky, one would hardly give credibility to Piaget's views of learning and development (e.g. intrapersonal nature of development, the presence of deriving force for equilibrium, self-directed concept acquisition which will ultimately lead to the development of a language system, etc.) as bearing the potential to account for a socially-directed, dialectic, instruction-based, assessment program the goal of which, among other classic goals, is to push learners forward onto a learning route and predict learners' potential performance level.

Meanwhile, as mentioned earlier, in some contexts, ongoing evaluation has been equated with DA. This misinterpretation is due to interpreting the term 'dynamic' as 'continual and ongoing' without considering the basic principles associated with the concept of DA. Obviously, conceptualizing modifiability as changes in the course of time due to instruction is different from the concept of modifiability based on a difference between independent performance

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and assisted performance at the time of assessment; only the latter captures the essence of a dynamic approach to assessing individual learners' potential as well as present learning abilities.

V. DA: Is it Equal to Formative Assessment?

The term formative assessment (also FA) typically refers to a number of measures and procedures adopted in classrooms at different time periods along a course of instruction with the objective of providing both the instructors and learners with feedback as to their success or failure as well as their strong and weak points (Bachman, 1990; Fulcher & Davidson, 2007). At a more global level, FA is also thought of as yielding information regarding the effectiveness of the course material and the design of the curriculum itself. Garrison and Ehringhaus (2007) see FA as part of the instructional process:

"When incorporated into classroom practice, it provides the information needed to adjust teaching and learning while they are happening. In this sense, formative assessment informs both teachers and students about student understanding at a point when timely adjustments can be made. These adjustments help to ensure students achieve targeted standards-based learning goals within a set time frame" (p. 1).

Likewise, d'Anglejan, Harley, and Shapson (1990) define FA as the process of gathering "information which will inform teachers and students about the degree of success of their respective efforts in the classroom. It allows teachers to diagnose students' strengths and weaknesses in relation to specific curricular objectives and thus guides them in organizing and structuring instructional material" (p. 107).

Meanwhile, however, some researchers like Leung and Mohan (2004) and Wood, Bruner, and Ross (1976) have conceived of DA as a particular type of FA and have, as such, interpreted it as standing in stark contrast to static assessments. Such a conceptualization, however, flies in face of reality as the two concepts are not indeed synonymous and hence cannot be used interchangeably. They are therefore critically reviewed in the following lines.

DA as a special type of FA in disguise is a misinterpretation of the concept. To be sure, they have in common the practice of assisting the learners in completing the required tasks; they do differ, however, with respect to the purposes for which they provide such assistance and the means to those ends. While DA is grounded in a well-established theory of development, i.e. ZPD, and is as such systematic in its practices, formative assessment is not based on any theory of development or learning. Moreover, in the former the negotiation and renegotiation of mediated assessment is, in addition to short-term goals (threshold development or modifiability), aimed at a long-term objective – prediction of learners' conscious awareness and control of a particular skill or content area in future on the basis of their present ability to transfer mediated performance to other unmediated contexts of use. However, in the latter the mediated performance merely plays a scaffolding (supporting) role in the completion of here-and-now tasks even when learners are required to reason their way through the answers – where modifiability is not a goal– and at its best is more aimed at providing feedback into teaching than at learners' future development in that the learners' strengths and weaknesses are taken into account so far as they feed back into teaching and reorganization of the instructional procedures and material. It follows that in purely FA-based programs, development, if any, might be achieved but it is for the most part unintended and incidental. It relies on the instructors' intuitions as to the type and rate of assistance which vary not only across instructors but even within the same instructor over time in an unsystematic hit-or-miss fashion. This unsystematicity may lead to either overestimation or underestimation of the learners' abilities and progress which would, in turn, result in "inappropriate instruction or no instruction at all when it is in fact required" (Rea-Dickins & Gardner, 2000, p. 238). It goes without saying, however, that an FA design is an essential part of any DA program since merely describing a learner's development as poor will not reveal the reasons for their poor performance. Nor does it provide recommendations as to efficient remedial measures aimed at enhancing their rate and quality of development.

Moreover, assessment in DA is not solely formative; it is also in part summative. The focus on either one or the other depends on a multitude of purposes and goals which underlie the express unitary objective of development in the future. While formative and summative assessments have been so far considered as mutually exclusive forms of evaluation due to the assumptions underlying the reliability and validity of test scores, DA draws on both insisting on the inseparability of assessment and instruction which together (according to DA) form learner development. In fact DA has the potential to unveil facts about learners' developmental status that other standardized assessments would otherwise fail to reveal. This failure then could lead to an underestimated evaluation of a learner's development (as poor) while the results of DA do not support such a position or it could simply overestimate the rate of a learner's development where, for example, standardized assessments do not indicate those delayed developments that DA most probably does. This fact has not gone unnoticed by Poehner and Lantolf (2005): "DA minimizes the risk of an erroneous evaluation, by definition. It provides mediation that is constantly adjusted and attuned to the learner's or group's responsiveness to mediation. At the same time, it promotes the very development it seeks to assess in the first place" (p. 252).

It follows that while in classic assessments the only feedback the examinees receive is a report on their scores, dynamic assessments are characterized by the examiners' attempts to modify the examinee's performance during the assessment employing both cognitive and affective feedbacks. This characteristic then is one more demarcation line between DAs and other non-DA types of assessment.

VI. Dynamic Assessment Revisited: Towards a Working Definition

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Dynamic assessment was defined above as a complex of procedures around the task of *modifying* learners' performances via tutor-examiners' assistance in an effort to yield information as to the potential development of the testees in future.

If the three components introduced by Freustein (intentionality, reciprocity, and transcendence) are incorporated into the definition, then, it yields the following: the complex of systematic but reciprocally determined procedures around the task of *modifying* learners' performances via tutor-examiners' assistance in an effort to yield information as to the potential development of the testees in future. This potential development is a direct function of the degree of modification, its stability over time and across tasks, and the amount of mediation required by a learner to change their performance and transcend that mediated performance over time and across tasks.

Operationally, then, learners' potential development could be assessed through recording the correctness of response data (response given to mediations), both within and beyond the mediation sessions, and dividing it by the number of aids required by learners to achieve certain levels of ability (change).

VII. Summary and Conclusion

While traditional classroom instructions were characterized by rigidly closed syllabi where the routes to language mastery were systematically organized into learning sequences based on the difficulty level of the structures or tasks, and the degree of the learners' success in proceeding through such hierarchies was determined by evaluating their independent performance on achievement tests, the learning route in alternative DA programs is not sequential and invariant and its scope and content is determined in an unanticipated, yet purposeful, fashion via instructor – learner interactions and negotiations. This interaction, however, is two-fold: it is targeted at both instruction and evaluation with the express objective of determining learners' zone of potential (proximal) development. The key factor here is to bring about changes (modifications) by way of instruction and then assess the degree of modifiability in the learners.

Despite this simplicity in definition, dynamic assessment has been realized in distinct and even conflicting ways with, in some extreme cases, little if any correspondence to the original assumptions or principles. Four such interpretations were examined here against the basic assumptions of DA: false DAs (ongoing evaluations and formative assessments wrongly interpreted as DA), interventionist DA, and interactionist DA. Of these four designs, only one (the interactionist design) seems to have fully adhered to the basic tenets and theoretical assumptions specified in a true DA program. Other three fail to meet the requirements of a fully-fledged dynamic assessment program.

To conclude, we cautioned against assuming that dynamic assessment refers solely to either of the three designs explicated above. More specifically, we caution against developing any other false DAs which might emerge as a result of ignoring or overlooking one or a number of features and characteristics associated with a true DA program; A fact which, if taken into account, will give rise to well-designed and adequately-defined dynamic assessment programs.

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Nonverbal Communication in College English Classroom Teaching

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***Abstract*—Human communication can be divided into two categories: verbal communication and nonverbal communication, where verbal means is commonly considered to be the most important, efficient, powerful means of communication. Over decades, much attention has been given to the research on verbal communication, while a very important fact was neglected: in face-to-face communication, the use of nonverbal communication is more common than that of verbal communication, and it is an essential part of human communication, which plays a significant role. Ignorance of nonverbal messages will result in incompleteness. In the past two decades, college English teaching has made great achievements. Yet problems still prevail. Daily classroom teaching is still inefficient although a lot of time and money has been spent on. One of the reasons for that is that nonverbal communication is neglected in daily classroom teaching. Teachers' nonverbal communication plays an important role in college English classroom teaching. Many studies find that teachers should learn to use nonverbal communication to improve the quality of classroom teaching. A famous scholar Cooper holds that if the teacher knows how to use nonverbal communication more efficiently. The relationship between the teacher and students will be improved, and the recognitive ability and learning efficiency of the students will also be developed.**

***Index Terms*—college English, classroom teaching, nonverbal communication**

I. Introduction

Communication is the basis of all human contact, which is central to human life. People communicate in many different ways. One of the most important ways, of course, is through language. Moreover, when language is written it can be completely isolated from the context in which it occurs; it can be treated as if it were an independent and self-contained process. We have been so successful in using, describing and analyzing this special kind of communication that we sometimes act as if language were the only kind of communication that can occur between people.

However, effective human communication falls into two types: verbal communication and nonverbal communication. For a long time, only the former one occurred to us immediately when we discuss human communication, while the latter was neglected to a large extent. In fact, nonverbal communication plays a very important role in human social behavior. Its importance has been fully accounted for by communication theorists. As Henry David Thoreau has ever said that in human intercourse the tragedy begins not when there is misunderstanding about words, but when silence is not understood.

Bi Jiwan states, "Western scholars believe that the role of nonverbal communication in classroom teaching is greater than that of formal teaching for students' learning. Research has indicated that teachers are required to learn to use nonverbal communication to improve classroom teaching." (1993:153) Classroom teaching and learning activity, especially college English classroom teaching and learning is a kind of communication between teachers and students. In this course both teachers and students use nonverbal and verbal means to communicate consciously or unconsciously. Teachers, especially college English teachers, as a bridge to international communication and information-sender, should be strongly aware of the importance of nonverbal communication, because nonverbal behaviors convey many messages in classroom, and become invaluable for teachers in getting the message across to class and understanding the messages of interest or messages of confrontation that students are sending. Their positive nonverbal cues can also influence the teacher's state of mind and the classroom atmosphere, and further improve the effect of classroom instruction. Generally speaking, the students' involvement and interest in the subject can be detected from their relaxed faces and smiles. So we can say, nonverbal communication between teachers and students plays an important role in college English classroom teaching.

II. Nonverbal Communication

A. The Definition of Nonverbal Communication

Before we try to explore nonverbal communication and its role in college English classroom teaching, we need to understand what nonverbal communication is. As for the definition of nonverbal communication, there are a variety of versions given by different people, some of which are very simple, while the others are more specific. Mask Knapp

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(1980:18) states, "Generally, when people refer to nonverbal communication, they are talking about the signals to which meaning will be attributed – not the process of attributing meaning …" Here we shall therefore select one definition that is consistent with current thinking in the field. Samovar and Porter (2000) propose that nonverbal communication involves all those nonverbal stimuli in a communication setting that are generated by both the source and his or her use of the environment and that have potential message value for the source of receiver.

We can come to the conclusion that the purpose of giving such a somewhat lengthy definition is to offer a definition that would not only mark the boundaries of nonverbal communication, but also reflect how the process actually works. This definition not only includes unintentional but intentional behaviors in the total communication event.

B. The Classification of Nonverbal Communication

As different linguists describe nonverbal communication in different dimension, there are many ways of categorizing nonverbal communication, among which the earliest is the one raised by Ruesch and Kees. They suggested there be three types of nonverbal behaviors based on the foundational components of nonverbal communication: sign language, action language, and object language. In Michael Argyle's book (1984) *Bodily Communication*, nonverbal communication is identical to body language, including facial expressions, gaze, gestures and bodily movements, postures, bodily contact, spatial behavior, clothes, physique and other aspects of appearance and nonverbal vocalizations.

In China, He Daokun (1988) proposed nonverbal communication concern the following categories as Time language, space language, body language, voice modulation and environment. In Bi Jiwan's (1999) opinion, nonverbal communication can be divided into the four classes: 1. Body language, including basic posture, gesture, basic manners and movements of any part of the body. 2. Paralanguage, referring to these elements such as pitch, speed, volume, tone, rhyme, silence and pause. 3. Object language, consisting of smell, complexion, clothing, cosmetics, furniture, etc. 4. Environment language, including time, space, colors, city planning and any human effect on nature. And according to him, the former two can be called "Nonverbal Behavior" and the latter two "Nonverbal Means".

C. The Significance of Nonverbal Communication

Leger Brosnahan (1991) says that half of the information in the communication is carried on the nonverbal band. Samovar (1981) positively expresses his view that most authorities believe that in a normal two-person conversation, the verbal components carry less than 35% of the total social meaning of the situation and that more than 65% is carried on the nonverbal band. Although we don't know whether these figures are accurate or not, at least they informed of us the significant roles that nonverbal communication plays in our daily interactions.

With the rapid development of Media, the wide spread of knowledge, and the frequent communication among people, the significance of nonverbal communication has grown to such an extent that it is how we say the words counts, instead of what we say. "Eyes are more accurate witnesses than ears." As Heraclitus remarked over two thousand years ago, we can infer that because nonverbal actions are not easily controlled consciously, they can precisely betray one's true feeling without distortion and deception. It is difficult to control a blushing face when we are embarrassed or a clenched jaw when we are angry. In fact, research indicates that we will believe nonverbal messages instead of verbal ones when the two contradict each other.

Nonverbal communication has value in human interaction because it is usually responsible for first impressions. Our first judgments are often based on the color of a person's skin or the manner in which he or she is dressed, which usually influences the perception of everything else that follows. Nonverbal communication is important to the study of intercultural communication because a great deal of nonverbal behavior speaks a universal language. Behaviors such as smiling, frowning, laughing and crying tend to have similar meanings, whether in China, America or any countries in Europe.

Verbal communication and nonverbal communication are integrated in human communication. The latter isn't the rest of human interaction with the absence of verbal communication, nor is the additional complementary one, but an indispensable action which plays a functional role in human communication. On one hand, a single verbal communication without any nonverbal communication can't be easily understood by people; on the other, it is companied by words that nonverbal communication can express explicit meanings, and there is no isolated nonverbal communication. It is the cooperation of verbal communication and nonverbal communication that forms the whole process of effective human communication. That is to say, we might see better that verbal message are more appropriate for some exchanges and nonverbal messages for others, and that both have their natural and complementary roles to play in human society.

D. The Relationship between Nonverbal Communication and College English Classroom Teaching

Although nonverbal communication plays a central role in human behavior, it remains for from being well understood. Earlier approaches to foreign language teaching and learning were basically oriented to the development of grammatical accuracy rather than communicative skills. College English teachers used to focus on English grammar and vocabulary, ignorant of the practical application of nonverbal communication so that the students feel the teachers' lectures are boring and they are frequently absent on purpose. With the advancement of linguistic science and teaching methodology research, the idea of developing learners' ability to use the target language for successful communication

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has become more and more popular. Experts and language teachers have become more and more aware of the effects of nonverbal communication on foreign language teaching. More understandings will be made if nonverbal communication companies the language. If the teacher's nonverbal communication is vivid and alive, it will be helpful for the students' understanding and command of knowledge in the classroom and it's also much easier for students to memorize. All these researches indicate that the teacher should be in high spirits and active.

Many western scholars hold that the nonverbal communication in the class is much more important in the students' study than in the regular teaching itself. If the teachers know well how to use nonverbal actions more effectively, the relationship between the teachers and the students will be improved, the students' cognitive ability and study effect alike. In 2007, in order to adapt to the new developing situation of national higher education, deepening the educational reform, upgrading the teaching quality and fitting in with the needs of the society, the Ministry of Education of China released the new College English Course Teaching and Learning Requirements. It indicates that English knowledge, applied skill, learning strategies are included in the objective of college English teaching, while cross-cultural communication includes the competence of verbal communication and that of nonverbal communication. To be exact, it is composed of three parts: written communication ability, oral communication ability and nonverbal communication ability. We can understand that nonverbal communication is an integrated part of English classroom teaching. Therefore college English teachers should fully realize the role played by nonverbal behaviors, let alone nonverbal behaviors performed by themselves, for the teachers' appropriate nonverbal behaviors not only improve the relationship between the teachers and the students, but also set up a good image for the students. For a vivid smile, an encouraging gesture, or a gentle expression in teachers' eyes can be effective tools for the improvement of the relation between teachers and students, which can also consequently improve classroom teaching effect.

III. The Practical Application of Nonverbal Communication in Classroom Teaching

A. Kinesics

The study of how movement communicates is called kinesics, or body language. As the most frequent use of nonverbal cues in class, kinesics can lead to the level of effectiveness of teaching directly. Teachers' smile, nod and pat of students' shoulders can indicate praise, while frown, head-shaking and confusing look can mean "no", and students' body language can convey their affection to the teacher and their attitudes toward the courses that they learn and toward school's rules. Here we would like to look into some of the more significant movements of kinesics from these five parts in great details. They are facial expressions, eye contact, gesture, posture as well as touch of teachers.

1. Facial Expression

Facial expression is a look on a person's face, and facial cues are the first information that we give to or receive from others. People get information about the type of the person, personality traits from face. Facial expression between teachers and students is one of the most important types of nonverbal signals in the classroom. In English class, the lively facial expressions can promote a supportive and non-threatening classroom atmosphere, which aids students' positive attitudes and corresponding achievement. When the teacher raises a question in English, an expectant expression he shows can encourage students to think carefully and answer actively. Sometimes an unconscious frown can make sensitive student correct his answer immediately. It is much better than just saying "No" or "Wrong", which can protect the students' proper pride. In addition, a teacher should often smile in class, a smiling teacher is thought to convey warmth and encouragement in all cultures, and will be perceived as more likable, friendly, warm and approachable.

2. Eye Contact

Eye contact is another important aspect of kinesics. We communicate a great deal through our eyes, perhaps more than through any other part of the body. As the saying goes, "The eyes are the window of the soul." The use of eye contact as an avenue of communication is relatively obvious. People are remarkably accurate in judging the direction of another person's gaze; psychologists have done experiments that have measured just how accurate such judgments are. In college English classroom, from an observation of where a student is looking the teacher can infer what the student is looking at, and from knowing what he is looking at the teacher can guess what he is interested in, and from what he is interested in and the general situation the teacher can usually make a fairly good guess about what he is going to do. Thus eye movements can be a rich and important channel of nonverbal communication.

There are two kinds of eye contact that the teacher often uses in class. One is looking around, which plays a very useful role in classroom teaching. On the one hand, it can be used to get the students' attention, to encourage students to think carefully, and to find the students who get or nearly get the answer so as to put questions to. On the other, it can be used as a means in classroom control. Another kind of eye contact is looking attentively or gaze. When the teacher criticizes the student's bad behavior, his eyesight should put on the triangle part of the students' face. By doing so, the teacher will be impressed as serious, careful and honest.

If a teacher looks at every student in the classroom or avoids looking at students, he conveys the attitude of intimacy, aloofness, concern, depression or indifference. Teachers often watch their students carefully for the sign of fatigue, boredom, confusion, or enthusiasm, for all these things will be communicated to the teachers through their eyes during the teachers' presentation.

English class may be a little more special than other classes, because English class requests students to talk more

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with teachers, especially, in English. Many students comment that they feel the most nervous in English class. So when the teacher ask someone to answer questions in English class, the messages expressed by his eyes should be more encouraging, more soft, may be just "as warm as spring". Then the students may feel more relaxed, get more self-confidence and practice their oral English more freely and willingly. So as time going on, a warm atmosphere can come into being and the level of students' spoken English can be improved obviously.

3. Gestures

Being the most common form of nonverbal behaviors in daily life, we need to understand the gestures of people. A gesture is an expressive motion or action, usually made with the hands and arms, but also with the head or even the while body. Gestures can occur with or without speech. Some gestures are spontaneous, some are highly ritualized and have very special meanings. It is through gestures that the body speaks. In other words, gestures are closely related to speech, illustrating or supplementing it. Gestures are so common in daily life that attracts special attention of many experts. They are mostly concerned with speech and other ways of nonverbal communication, but sometimes they cannot stand alone. Generally speaking, a speaker uses gestures for two purposes: to reinforce an idea or to help describe something. Through gestures we can express our attitudes toward other.

A teacher may be considered as boring, stiff and inanimate, if he or she fails to use gestures while speaking. Comparatively, a lively and animated teaching style captures students' attention, and makes the material more interesting, facilitates learning and provides a bit of entertainment. In the process of the presentation, hand and arm movements are often employed to physically depict conceptual, intellectual, abstract, or narrative elements of the presentation. Using gestures in English classroom teaching can make some complex grammar points easier to understand.

4. Posture

People on earth all use posture to communicate. There are numerous body postures which offer insight into a culture's deep structure. An individual postures in a specific culture can send off a strong message. Scholars have found at least 10,000 significant different body attitudes capable of being maintained steadily.

For a teacher, standing or sitting in relaxing professional manner, is a positive posture, which can arouse students' positive attitude, and show that you are approachable, receptive and friendly. Being comfortably upright, squarely facing the students, and evenly distributing the weight are to change students' mood, draw students' attention, or reinforce some ideas. Traditionally, Chinese teachers, rated as Confucian scholars, are the souls of belief, knowledge and authority. Their image of power certainly ought not to be damaged by the unserious posture in Chinese traditional culture. However, nowadays, college students prefer college English teachers especially young teachers being casual and friendly.

5. Touch

For blind and deaf people, touch is the principle means of communication. Even the average person without these handicaps relies heavily on touch to communicate. We know that a slap on the back can mean a touch of friendship or a sign of encouragement and that stroking a dog or a cat conveys affection. Physical touch always communicates messages, especially emotional ones. Greetings and departures between friends and loved ones often involve touch in one way or another. Touch is also an efficient way of breaking down communication barriers. A full embrace, a kiss, a stroke of the face are ways of showing our love, and hand shaking can also easily make two strangers familiar to each other on their first meeting.

As the most extreme reduction of individual distance, touch is one of our most primitive and yet sensitive ways of relating to others, and plays a significant role in giving encouragement, expressing tenderness and showing emotional supports. It can be even more powerful than words sometimes, especially for establishing a link to students or conveying emotion. However, where these touches are directed is critical. Appropriate body contact means calmness, directness, belief and favor. The shoulder and arm are the most acceptable body areas to be touched, especially for the boys, and the chest and legs the least, especially for older girls. Back, head and hands are intermediate areas, but the head and hands, which are frequently touched by teachers of very young children, become less acceptable from ten or eleven onwards, especially for girls. As might be expected, all groups of students disliked angry types of touch, such as being hit or having their head twisted round. Furthermore, it is not common for college teachers to touch students. Most college students do not like teacher's touch, except for some necessary or particular situations such as encouraging touch combined with words, which would be more effective than verbal encouragement alone sometimes.

B. Paralanguage

Paralanguage is the way we vocalize or say the words we speak. The full and correct use of paralanguage in class is very powerful to the effective teaching and learning. Here we mainly deal with the use of ppp in college English classroom from two aspects: nonverbal sounds and pause and silence.

1. Nonverbal Sounds

The facet of nonverbal sounds, which is often named "vocal paralanguage", includes such vocal elements as intonation, tone, pitch, rhythm, volume, pace etc. These elements form a powerful, subtle and vital part of communication. Nonverbal sounds claim a person's emotional states. They also represent a person's demographic traits and indicate a person's personality characteristics.

As the disseminator of foreign language and the object whom the students try to imitate and learn from, English

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teachers should pay more attention to the aspects of nonverbal sounds. Effective English teachers are more likely to be good at varying their voice or convey different messages in different situations for different purposes. While presenting materials, effective English teachers are more inclined to employ emphatic intonation and few ungrammatical pauses, while the less important one is skimmed through quickly than the ineffective ones. As Sean expresses, teachers are more likely to use proclaiming tone when referring to aspects of their theme, which have already been covered once. Observations reveal that presentation with a loud voice, a high pitch and a fast rate is more likely to draw students' attention than that with a relatively quiet voice, a low pitch and a slow rate. Generally speaking, when there are key points in the process of teaching, or there exists some problems needing being emphasized, the teacher can raise his tone and slow down the speed. When in the process of statement, the mid-pitch and low-pitch can be alternatives, and the speed can be raised. When the students seem tired, the teacher should change his tone in time to make them excited again.

2. Pause and Silence

Pause, to some extend, is a kind of silence. It is a brief silence. Traditionally, silence has been defined as negatively as merely the absence of speech. However, silence is a rich conversational and expressive resource. Much of the time, brief silence or pauses and longer silence assume the function of contact or emphasis for spoken language. Although we accept the blank part of the page without notice, silences of any duration may draw our attention, and sometimes pauses or lengthy silences may become the foreground. Silence then becomes the medium for conveying a message.

In class, when a teacher gives a lecture, he may have brief pause or silence to achieve the purpose of contrast or emphasis for the presentation. Moreover, a teacher may pause a little when another topic is turned to. And a number of teachers may use silence as an effective means to dominate a noisy class. A student may keep silence, when he is uninformed or he is not clear about what a teacher says, or he is unwilling to answer a question. Sometimes, a student may be silent, when he agrees or disagrees with what has been said, or he is considering a question. In addition, the silence in language in teaching is also a very important aspect in terms of the language rhyme. There exists "The silence is gold." The change of the expression of language refers to the alternatives of humor and seriousness, which means that the ideal effect of teaching lies in the change of many kinds of style of language instead of being merely serious or humorous all the time. The feature of the students' recognition and attention is the proof of the change of teacher's language style.

C. Spatial Language

Space here refers to the distance between teachers and students. As we know, teaching and learning in classroom is a process of communication and the spatial distance between teachers and students is a "critical factor in the communication process". Whether the spatial distance between a teacher and his students in class is appropriate or not may affect positively or negatively on teaching and learning activities. In China, most students prefer their teachers moving around the classroom to the teacher's just standing at the very front between the blackboard and the platform. Some students think the teacher who walks around the room or stands closer to them is perceived as friendly and can make students more involved in class activities. On the other hand, it has also been found that teachers do stand further away from poor students or put them in the far end of the classroom. The teachers who conduct their classes while standing or walking among their students re viewed more positively than those standing at the front of the classroom, and are seen friendlier and are more effective than those who stand further away from the students.

According to our daily observation, when a student gets absent-minded or does something irrelevant to the teaching content, the teacher, if permitted, will move forward to the student if he or she does not want to interrupt the communication among the other students. Under this circumstance, the thing noticed is that the students bring back his attention and resumes his classroom activity. So here comes an indication that the closer the teacher is to the student, the better the student responds both in attitude and in academic performance. That is to say, there is a decrease in students' participation as the distance between teachers and students increases and as the directness with which they face each other decrease. If a teacher just stands behind the teacher's desk throughout the process of class, he neglects the fact that "motionless teachers can bore students".

D. Time Language

Time language is also called chronemics. It is the study of time, or more precisely, the study of how humans perceive, structure and use time as nonverbal communication.

In English class, time distribution can play a significant role. At the beginning of every class, the teacher can use five minutes to do a warming-up. The teacher can ask one student to make a short report about weather, news, or to tell a humor or just sing a song in English. This "warming-up" time can not only make each student have an opportunity to practice oral English, but also form an English atmosphere quickly. This is much better than start teaching as soon as class begins. During teaching process, "ask and answer" is a necessary chain. How much time for teachers to spend on a student is another aspect of the use of time. It is a rule that more difficult questions need more time to think, and less able students want more time to be cared about.

Another topic refers to time used in class is punctuality. Different cultures and different individuals have different attitudes toward what is punctuality, the appropriate times. Teachers in Chinese colleges are required to enter the classroom several minutes earlier for preparation before the class begins. It is also common that students are required to

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be on time for class. Those students who are punctual to class can impress teachers positively, while students who are frequently late for class may be perceived as irresponsible, lazy, or uninterested. Thus, we must be constantly aware of the messages we send through our use and misuse of time.

IV. Conclusion

Nonverbal communication plays a significant role in our daily life and it has a credible and powerful influence on our daily classroom teaching. College English classroom teaching and learning, as a social interaction between teacher and students, is conducted by verbal means and nonverbal means. The effectiveness of teaching and learning in class, to some extent, depends on the proper use of nonverbal behaviors. As the college English teacher, we should hold that college English teaching aims to promote students' cross-cultural communicative competence which consists of verbal and nonverbal. Not only should college English teachers be equipped with knowledge of nonverbal communication, but also the students in colleges should be encouraged to improve their nonverbal communicative competence.

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Validation of an NLP Scale and its Relationship with Teacher Success in High Schools

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***Abstract*—The major aims of this study were first to construct and validate a questionnaire of Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP) and second to examine its relationship with teacher success in the context of Iran. To this end, a questionnaire was designed by picking up the most frequently-used indicators of NLP. To validate the questionnaire, Exploratory Factor Analysis was performed. Then, the authors sought to find out the relationship between NLP and English language teachers success at high schools. Results indicated that there is a significant association between NLP and teacher success. Finally, statistical results were discussed, and implications were provided in the context of English language teaching.**

***Index Terms*—neuro-linguistic programming, language teaching, construct validity, factor analysis**

I. Introduction

Effective teaching requires fostering good relationship with learners. Learners open their minds to the teacher who rules their hearts and souls. Learners generally express themselves in classes in which teachers know how to establish effective relationship with them. Teachers by building rapport and having effective communication with their students can facilitate the process of learning. Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP), as an important concept in humanistic psychology, deals with the art of communication and the study of the structure of subjective experience (Tosey, Mathison & Michelli, 2005). In fact, NLP is a set of general communication techniques and strategies for building rapport, personal change, and learning.

As O' Connor (2001) defined "NLP studies brilliance and quality_ how outstanding individuals and organizations get their outstanding results" (p. 1). Furthermore, Kudliskis and Burden (2009) explained NLP as a modeling process in which people try to learn and gain the art of "communication excellence". Originally, NLP was a major theme exclusively in the fields of counseling and psychotherapy (Gumm, Walker & Day, 1982; Sharply, 1984; Einspruch & Forman, 1985; Tosey, Mathison & Michelli, 2005); whereas, today this technique is being utilized by many other practitioners including: managers, consultants, doctors, lawyers, sport trainers, and a lot more (Tosey, Mathison & Michelli, 2005; Kudliskis & Burden, 2009; Karunaratne, 2010).

Richards and Rodgers (2001) also have introduced NLP as a supplementary technique in teaching second language and Millroad (2004) defined this technique as "An approach to language teaching which is claimed to help achieve excellence in learner performance" (p. 28), enjoying much potential for teaching and learning second language.

A review of the literature on NLP demonstrates that its role in the realm of education and particularly Second or Foreign Language Learning (ESL/EFL) has not been examined effectively. Due to the scarcity of research in this area, we aimed to conduct an investigation into the nature of NLP. To this end, the current study has tried to construct a questionnaire of NLP and subsequently validate it through its application to non-native English teachers and to verify its role in English language teachers' success at high schools in Iran.

II. Theoretical Background

In the following, we will present different models of NLP along with some theoretical and related empirical findings on the concept of teacher success. Since, to our best knowledge, no other research was found to determine the effect of NLP techniques on teachers' success in the classroom we are going to focus on the literature of each variable individually.

A. NLP

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As stated above, trying to reach excellence is the main aspect of NLP. To this end, *change* is substantial. O' Connor (2001) suggests that change, is a journey from an unsatisfactory present state towards a desired state - your outcome (p. 11). Since all the changes, in the first place, occur at the unconscious level, the unconscious mind is benevolent. One way of changing is offered in TOTE model (Test _ Operation _ Test _ Exit). This model highlights the role of feedback and feed forward in achieving one's goals (O' Connor, 2001). For any successful change rapport is needed, that is effective relationships must be constructed for the fact that we try to understand the other person from *his* point of view (O' Connor, 2001). NLP believes that people act according to the way they perceive the world not according to the way the world really is (Tosey, Mathison & Michelli, 2005). That is, we create our maps of reality individually and do not behave to this world directly (Bandler & Grinder, 1975). The principal notion of Preferred Representational System (PRS) suggests that individuals construct internal maps of the world by processing external information through five sensory systems: visual, auditory, kinesthetic, olfactory and gustatory (Davies, 2009, p. 59). According to Grinder and Bandler (1976), O' Connor (2001) and Gumm, Walker and Day (1982) PRS manifests itself through "accessing cues" such as body language, eye movement, and voice tone. NLP takes language literally. Predicate phrases and metaphors lead us to the representational system that an individual is using and also the submodalities involved (O' Connor, 2001). O' Connor (2001) states that the senses are the 'modalities' we use to think, so the qualities of the sense experience are 'submodalities' (p. 94). Therefore, changing submodalities changes the meaning of an experience. The core model of NLP, Meta Model, is believed to reflect underlying cognitive processes based on language patterns (Tosey & Mathison, 2003). Due to its prominent role in eliciting individual's distinct realities, Meta Model is considered as a primary NLP tool (Einspruch & Forman, 1985). In some ways, the Milton Model is the mirror image of the Meta Model. In contrast to Meta Model that moves from deep structure to surface structure, the Milton Model shifts from surface structure to deep structure. Furthermore, the Meta Model accesses conscious understanding in contrast to the Milton Model that accesses unconscious resources (O' Connor, 2001).

As mentioned earlier, NLP models revealed to be applicable to the realm of education. Since NLP is subjective and constructivist in nature (Craft, 2001); its techniques have been presented quite distinctively by various psychologists and scholars. Nevertheless, the researchers preferred to give the following taxonomy offered by Millroad (2004) as it centered around teaching a second or foreign language to learners: *Establishing a rapport between teacher and learners, Modeling the learner, Creating a learner filter, Pacing with the learner, Leading the learner, Elicitation with the learner, Calibration of the learner, Reframing the approach, Collapsing an anchor (*p. 30). As he asserted, establishing a rapport was constructed upon teachers' support, empathy and interaction with the learners. For the concept of modeling he suggested providing students with strategies to gain better results. Creating a learner filter required the teacher to verify pupils' responses along with their attitude and knowledge. Pacing was another NLP technique employed to harmonize teachers' and learners' rate, style and production. For the purpose of leading the learners, Millroad (2004) proposed raising cognitive challenges for them; thereafter, pupils had to be directed toward an output that was regarded to as elicitation. Calibration was the process of distinguishing individual differences. Since learners were different from each other, they owned different learning strategies as well. When some strategies were unproductive, reframing would be conducted, i.e. those techniques had to be replaced with other alternatives. Last of all was collapsing an anchor that highlighted supporting students' success and achievements (Millroad, 2004).

B. Teacher Success

The concept of teacher success has been the major concern of educators and researchers for a long time. Many attempts have been made in the past to specify various factors contributing to teaching effectiveness. A number of features like working condition and the environment (Johnson & Birkeland, 2003; Korthagen, 2004), teachers' personality along with some of their behavioral aspects (Bhardwaj, 2009; Medley & Mitzel, 1955) and teachers' ability and skill (Porter & Brophy, 1988) were investigated to have a great influence on this specific issue.

Evidently, this notion is highly considerable to teacher educators and supervisors due to its direct impact on learning and teaching. For this very reason, in 2007 Elizabeth, May and Chee tried to build a model of teacher success in Hong Kong. They concluded that effective teachers were creative, skilful, and fair in assessment and grading. Additionally, they were managed to engage learners, improve critical thinking and provide feedback. In another attempt to define teachers' success Tamblyn (2000) distinguished seven attributes of successful teachers: Creativity, skill, flexibility, warmth and humor were a few of them. Similarly, in 1967, Beck determined that pupils perceive the effective teacher as a warm, friendly and supportive person. Dodge (1943) concluded that more successful teachers were more sociable, sensitive to people's opinions, responsible, less worried and slower in decision making than less successful teachers. In another survey, Gage (1963) discovered that students' ideal teachers were mostly the ones who would behave as students wanted them to behave.

Along with personal qualities of teachers like patience, enthusiasm and sense of humor, professional qualities are also substantial (Elizabeth, May & Chee, 2007). For instance Porter and Brophy (1988) identified that another factor leading to teachers' success was the ability and skill of the teacher in employing instructional materials, planning, questioning, assessing and evaluating.

In comparison with other findings that had put so much emphasis on teachers themselves to discover characteristics of successful teachers, Korthagen (2004) and Johnson and Birkeland (2003) found the element of environment, like school facilities, heavy teaching loads and unsupportive administrators, highly interfering. Moafian and Pishghadam (2009) also

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have designed a questionnaire to measure teacher success in schools and language institutes. They have specified 12 constructs which can measure teacher success. It seems that none of the research projects done in teacher education have paid attention to the role of NLP in teacher success.

III. Purpose of the Study

Due to the importance of NLP in language teaching, this study intends, first to construct and validate a questionnaire of NLP, and then to apply it as an example to the teaching language in Iran. In fact, this study has two phases: Validation and Application. We hope our instrument can deepen and enrich our understanding of NLP constructs and help researchers conduct more empirical research into the nature of NLP and different issues in language learning and teaching. With that in mind, this study investigates two research questions:

1. What factors are measured by NLP when examined with EFL teachers?
2. Is there any significant relationship between NLP and language teaching success?

IV. Method

A. Participants

The whole study consisted of two phases: 1) Validation and 2) Application of NLP questionnaire. In the first phase of the study, the sample consisted of 175 EFL teachers who were teaching in high schools (N=93) and language institutes (N=83) in Mashhad, Iran. In the second phase of the study, the sample comprised 93 EFL high school teachers along with 1200 EFL students.

During the first phase, participants consisted of 175 EFL teachers aged between 18 and 48 years old (Mean = 39) with a range of between 1 and 22 years of teaching experience (Mean = 13.3). They were 101 females and 73 males from different fields of study; however, the majority of them had majored in the various branches of English like English teaching, English literature, and English translation. Some, nevertheless, had degrees in majors other than English.

Throughout the second phase, the participants comprised 93 EFL teachers (32 males and 61 females) and 1200 EFL students of the mentioned teachers (441 males and 759 females). Students were all at high school level and ranged from 15 to 18 years old (Mean = 16.3). Teachers aged between 32 to 51 (Mean = 37) with range of between 6 to 21 years of teaching experience. Their fields of studies were English teaching, English literature, and English translation.

B. Instrument

In the first place, a questionnaire was constructed and then validated to be used as an instrument for conducting the second phase of this study and also further research in the field of foreign language learning.

The second questionnaire employed for the second phase of the study, to investigate teachers' success in the classroom, was 'Characteristics of successful EFL teachers' (Moafian & Pishghadam, 2009). This questionnaire consists of 47 multiple choice items varying from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree". The total reliability of the questionnaire is 0.94 and the results of factor analysis has revealed 12 constructs: teaching accountability, interpersonal relationships, attention to all, examination, commitment, learning boosters, creating a sense of competence, teaching boosters, physical and emotional acceptance, empathy, class attendance, and dynamism.

C. Data Collection

Following the taxonomy and guidelines proposed by Millroad (2004), the researchers constructed the related questionnaire adopting a straightforward procedure including three steps: 1) Designing the test 2) Validation 3) Administering the test along with 'Characteristics of successful EFL teachers' questionnaire to investigate their correlation.

Applying the guidelines provided by the experts in the field of psychology and language teaching, the researchers designed the questionnaire with 38 items in the 5 scale Likert type. In doing so, they held joint consultations to revise the items. Then a pilot study was carried out. The questionnaire was administered to 175 EFL teachers of several schools and private language institutes in Mashhad, Khaaf and Torbat, cities in north-eastern of Iran.

Consequently, throughout the third step, the questionnaire was administered to 93 teachers of different high schools. Simultaneously, 'Characteristics of successful EFL teachers' questionnaire was given to 1200 students of the mentioned teachers during class hours by prior arrangement with the administrators.

D. Data Analysis

The internal consistency of the whole questionnaire was assessed with the Cronbach Alpha reliability estimate. Moreover, using Cronbach Alpha, the internal consistency of each factor constructing the validated questionnaire was also examined.

The validity of the hypothesized factor structure of the NLP questionnaire was examined through Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA). Initially, principal axis factoring identified the underlying factors by calculating the eigenvalues of the matrix greater than 1.0. Due to the subjectivity of the criterion for selecting absolute value, the researchers decided to interpret only factor loading with an absolute value 0.30 or greater. To decide about the number of factors to retain for

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rotation, the Scree test was used. Since interpretation of the factors can be very difficult, a solution for this difficulty is factor rotation. In so doing, Varimax (orthogonal rotation) with Kaiser Criterion was used. This resulted in a rotated component matrix and a transformation matrix. The rotated component matrix illustrated the variables loaded on each factor so that the researchers came up with new factors.

Then, the validated questionnaire was applied to identify the NLP factors that the EFL teachers carried out in the classroom. Finally, Pearson product-moment correlation was employed to examine the relationship between the newly-made questionnaire and teacher success. The data was entered into and processed with SPSS 16 program.

Regarding the questionnaire, it comprises 38 items. The items are scored according to the Likert- type scale of five points ranging from (1) "strongly disagree" to (5) "strongly agree". It must be mentioned that scoring scheme of items 24, 32, 33, 34, 36, 37 and 38 is vice versa as they are negative statements. That is (5) "strongly disagree" to (1) "strongly agree".

V. Results

A. Reliability of the NLP Questionnaire

The researchers by means of Cronbach Alpha, estimated the reliability of the whole items as 0.82. After inspecting the factor rotation, none of the items was omitted.

TABLE 1
RELIABILITY OF EACH FACTOR OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Factors	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
Factor 1	.85	6
Factor 2	.74	4
Factor 3	.71	5
Factor 4	.78	3
Factor 5	.81	7
Factor 6	.79	4
Factor 7	.77	4
Factor 8	.82	5

B. Construct Validity

The researchers measured the factorability of the inter correlation matrix by two tests: these tests are Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin test of Sampling Adequacy (KMO) and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity. The results of these tests showed that the factor model was appropriate. The results are given in Table 2.

TABLE 2
KMO AND BARTLETT'S TEST

KMO and Bartlett's Test		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy		.704
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	1.969E3
	df	703
	Sig.	.000

Then the construct validity of NLP Questionnaire was examined through Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA). PCA extracted 8 factors with eigenvalues greater than 1 which accounted for 64 % of the variance.

Using the results obtained from the Scree Test, it can be indicated that an eight-factor solution might provide a more suitable grouping of the items in the questionnaire (Figure 1).

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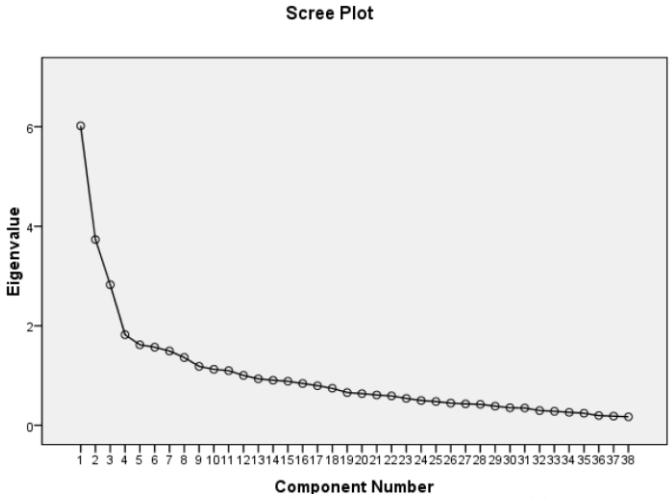

Figure 1 The Scree test for identifying the number of factors

The researchers, then, inspected orthogonal rotation. The result was a rotated component matrix. The results indicated that the first factor consisted of 6 items. The second factor consisted of 4 items. Factor 3 consisted of 5 items. Factor 4 consisted of 3 items. Factor 5 consisted 7 items. Factor 6 consisted 4 items. Factor 7 consisted 4 items, and factor 8 consisted 5 items. The total number of items was 38. The result of this analysis is shown in Table 3.

TABLE 3
ROTATED COMPONENTS OBTAINED VIA PRINCIPAL COMPONENT ANALYSIS AND THEIR LOADINGS

Component 1	Component 2	Component 3	Component 4	Component 5	Component 6	Component 7	Component 8
36 = 0.79	35 = 0.68	28 = 0.74	30 = 0.72	21 = 0.70	7 = 0.66	2 = 0.80	19 = 0.71
34 = 0.74	31 = 0.57	9 = 0.68	14 = 0.68	4 = 0.70	16 = 0.59	1 = 0.71	17 = 0.58
37 = 0.64	15 = 0.52	13 = 0.48	26 = 0.58	8 = 0.61	29 = 0.50	3 = 0.39	10 = 0.40
33 = 0.62	25 = 0.51	18 = 0.41		11 = 0.39	23 = 0.34	6 = 0.38	20 = 0.37
24 = 0.61		32 = 0.31		12 = 0.37			22 = 0.32
38 = 0.52				27 = 0.34			
				5 = 0.3			

Finally, the researchers analyzed the factors and their comprising items and then named the eight factors as *Flexibility*, *Anchoring*, *Elicitation*, *Modeling*, *Individual differences*, *Leading*, *Establishing Rapport, and Emotional and Cognitive Boosters.* All the eight factors along with their items are displayed in Table 4. The validated questionnaire is given in Appendix A.

TABLE 4
EIGHT FACTORS OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

#areas	Statements	N of items	Percentage
1. Flexibility	36, 34, 37, 33, 24, 38	6	16
2. Anchoring	35, 31, 15, 25	4	10.5
3. Elicitation	28, 9, 13, 18, 32	5	13
4. Modeling	30, 14, 26	3	8
5. Individual Differences	21, 4, 8, 11, 12, 24, 5		18.5
6. Leading	7, 16, 29, 23	4	10.5
7. Establishing Rapport	2, 1, 3, 6	4	10.5
8. Emotional and Cognitive Boosters	19, 17, 10, 20, 22	5	13
	Total	38	100

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C. NLP and Teacher Success

To determine the association between NLP and teacher success, Pearson product-moment correlation was employed. As Table 5 exhibits there is a significant relationship ($r = 0.34$, $p < .05$) between NLP and teacher success. It implies that those teachers who employ more NLP techniques in their classes are more successful than other teachers.

TABLE5
CORRELATION BETWEEN NLP AND TEACHER SUCCESS

Variables	N	Cor.	Sig.
NLP Teacher Success	93	.342	.00*

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

VI. DISCUSSION

A. The Validated Questionnaire

This study tried to find out the reliability and validity of the NLP Questionnaire in the context of EFL teachers. The results of this analysis were used to name each factor. In the following the process and the reasons for selecting these names for the eight factors are explained.

1. Flexibility

Flexibility is the label for the first factor which consists of 6 items. As it is shown in the Appendix, items 24, 33, 34, 36, 37 and 38 measure teachers' level of flexibility in classroom context in general. All these items test the negative actions and reactions of the teacher and if the teacher could manage the teaching process in a flexible way or not.

2. Anchoring

The second factor is called *Anchoring* which refers to the process by which an internal or external stimulus triggers a response (Millrood, 2004). This factor consists of 4 items. Items 15, 25, 31 and 35 measure the amount of anchor that occur naturally or is set up intentionally by the teacher. Anchoring is related to students' success and progress, which are involved in items 31 and 35. The learners' need to be involved in class activities is measured by item 25.

3. Elicitation

Factor 3 which is known as *Elicitation* comprises 5 items. By definition elicitation is refers to evoking a state by one`s behavior (Millrood, 2004). Items 9, 13, 18, 28, and 32, test the teacher's strategy in gathering information by direct observation of non-verbal signals or by asking Meta Model questions.

4. Modeling

Modeling is the label selected by the researchers for the fourth factor of the questionnaire which includes 3 items. Items 14, 26, and 30 ask to what extent the teacher is successful in the process of presenting the new or difficult material in order to enable the students to accomplish a task. Also these items are related to accelerating learning by the teacher.

5. Individual Differences

The fifth factor of the questionnaire is referred to as *Individual Differences* which is explained as a tendency on the part of the teacher to give every individual student in the classroom a sense of belonging by considering all of their points of view and ideas. Items 4, 5, 8, 11, 12, 21, and 27 test the process of engaging all the students equally by the teacher.

6. Leading

The sixth factor of the questionnaire that is consisted of 4 items is named *Leading*, which is referred to as changing one's behavior with enough relationship to motivate the other person to follow you. Items 7, 16, 23, and 29 ask the teacher's skill in leading and helping the students over the learning bridge.

7. Establishing a Rapport

Rapport is the label for the seventh factor in this questionnaire. It consists 4 items which are related to the process of establishing and maintaining a mutual relationship full of trust and understanding between the teacher and the learners. Items 1, 2, 3, and 6, test the teacher's ability in making negotiation with learners and generating responses from them.

8. Emotional and Cognitive Boosters

The last and eighth factor which is labeled in this questionnaire is *Emotional and Cognitive Boosters.* It includes 5 factors. Items 10, 17 and 22 test the teacher's ability in bringing an emotional environment to evoke the learners' engagement. Items 19 and 20 are related to teacher's strategies in stimulating and empowering learners' cognition.

B. Teacher Success

The results of correlational analysis also confirm the association between NLP and teacher success. These results are compatible with the claims of Richards and Rodgers (2001) who espouse the use of NLP techniques in class. Since language teaching is based on communication and interaction, fostering a close rapport is of fundamental importance in class. Besides, the NLP techniques help teachers to be more flexible and caring toward their work and individual learners. By using NLP strategies students will be given greater opportunities to learn effectively. Therefore, it is no wonder that there is association between NLP and teacher success in class.

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VII. Conclusion

The value of this questionnaire lies in constructing an NLP scale which can be of great help to researchers interested in studying NLP. We have utilized exploratory factor analysis as an efficient tool for determining the underlying factors of the instrument. The results have revealed that eight factors represent the underlying structure of the NLP instrument. It is our hope that future research will lead to further evaluation and improvement of this instrument. Researchers should continue to carry out thorough assessment of the psychometric properties of the instrument designed to measure NLP. Only after the true factor structure of the NLP instrument has been examined, can researchers confidently assert conclusions about the role of NLP in language learning and teaching.

The findings of the study also give support to the use of NLP factors in education. In this perspective, NLP is not only used and viewed in terms of counseling (counselor - client relationship) or medical context; rather it is used in terms of education, especially teaching English. As a matter of fact, NLP is a tool that makes learning a psychological process. By using NLP techniques and realizing their role in bringing change in learning and teaching context, the teachers can make progress in achieving their ultimate capabilities. By producing change based on NLP factors, teachers can bring about practical results for learners and attract them more to the class environment emotionally.

Moreover, by providing training courses in practice, NLP can facilitate exploring successful teachers in facing difficult situations. Therefore, this can be beneficial for schools' or English institutes' managers to select and employ those English teachers who will be more successful in their career by using the NLP questionnaire.

In the end, researchers are recommended to examine objectively the relationship between NLP and other related variables such as: motivation, language learning and teaching strategies, age, or gender. These variables seem to be highly related to the NLP factors. Finding any association between these variables and NLP helps us have a better understanding of the role of these factors in second language learning research.

Appendices

A. The Factors of the NLP Questionnaire

Factor 1: Flexibility

1. I expect my students to adjust themselves to my teaching rate.
2. I correct all the language learners' errors.
3. The language learners can form groups freely.
4. I run the class in a formal way.
5. I make use of only one teaching method.
6. I do not make use of encouragement for the language learners' progress.

Factor 2: Anchoring

1. I ask successful language learners to talk about their personal ways of progress in the classroom.
2. I inform my students of their progress.
3. If needed, I ask the language learners to speak clearly.
4. I assign a special duty for every individual.

Factor 3: Elicitation

1. I get the language learners' ideas of the topics presented in class.
2. To ensure my students` understanding and to remove the ambiguities, I ask them some questions.
3. I create new challenges for the language learners.
4. I welcome new and creative answers.
5. I give feedback to my students` correct and incorrect answers.

Factor 4: Modeling

1. I write down the new subject material on the board as a model.
2. When the language learners do not understand a subject matter, I write it down on the board.
3. During the teaching process, I write down the new material on the board.

Factor 5: Individual Differences

1. I pay attention to individual differences.
2. I help the students with less language ability.
3. I pay attention to the language learners' eye movements.
4. I give enough time to the language learners to write down notes and do class activities.
5. I try to create a positive feeling in my students toward language learning.
6. All students` opinions are important to me.
7. When the language learners do not understand something, I present it in a new way.

Factor 6: Leading

1. I give the language learners the words needed for a conversation.
2. For holding a dialogue, I present the required grammar.
3. For better learning and understanding, I ask the language learners to take notes.
4. I ask my students of my teaching and speaking rate in the classroom.

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Factor 7: Establishing Rapport

1. In answering the questions, I give hints to students.
2. I show my interest to the topics presented by my students.
3. During teaching, I use some of the words or phrases used by the language learners.
4. I ask my students to pay attention to similarities and differences of the subjects.

Factor 8: Emotional and Cognitive Boosters

1. I make use of flash cards, CDs, posters, and other teaching aids.
2. I prefer to call my students by their first name.
3. I let my students move freely in the classroom.
4. I ask my students to pay attention to details in the discussing a topic.
5. I talk about myself and my own experiences in the classroom.

B. Neuro-linguistic Programming Questionnaire (NLPQ)

No.	Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	I show my interest to the topics presented by my students.	1	2	3	4	5
2	In answering the questions, I give hints to the students.	1	2	3	4	5
3	While teaching, I use some of the words or phrases used by the learners.	1	2	3	4	5
4	I help my students with less language ability.	1	2	3	4	5
5	When the learners do not understand something, I present it in a new way.	1	2	3	4	5
6	I ask my students to pay attention to similarities and differences of the subjects.	1	2	3	4	5
7	I give my students the words needed for a conversation.	1	2	3	4	5
8	I pay attention to the language learners' eye movements.	1	2		4	5
9	To ensure learners' understanding and to remove the ambiguities, I ask them some questions.	1	2	3	4	5
10	I let the learners move freely in the classroom.	1	2	3	4	5
11	I give enough time to the language learners to write down notes and do class activities.	1	2	3	4	5
12	I try to create a positive feeling in my students toward language learning.	1	2	3	4	5
13	I create new challenges for my students.	1	2	3	4	5
14	When the learners do not understand a subject matter, I write it down on the board.	1	2	3	4	5
15	If needed, I ask the language learners to speak clearly.	1	2	3	4	5
16	For holding a dialogue, I present the required grammar.	1	2	3	4	5
17	I prefer to call my students by their first name.	1	2	3	4	5
18	I welcome new and creative answers.	1	2	3	4	5
19	I make use of flash cards, CDs, posters, and other teaching aids.	1	2	3	4	5
20	I ask my students to pay attention to details.	1	2	3	4	5
21	I pay attention to individual differences.	1	2	3	4	5
22	I talk about myself and my own experiences in the classroom.	1	2	3	4	5
23	I ask my students of my teaching and speaking rate in the classroom.	1	2	3	4	5
24	I make use of only one teaching method.	5	4	3	2	1
25	I assign a special duty for every individual.	1	2	3	4	5
26	During the teaching process, I write down the new material on the board.	1	2	3	4	5
27	All my students` opinions are important to me.	1	2	3	4	5
28	I get my students` ideas of the topics presented in class.	1	2	3	4	5
29	For better learning and understanding, I ask the learners to take notes.	1	2	3	4	5
30	I write down the new subject material on the board as a model.	1	2	3	4	5
31	I inform my students of their progress.	1	2	3	4	5
32	I give feedback to my students` correct and incorrect answers.	1	2	3	4	5
33	I run the class in a formal way.	5	4	3	2	1
34	I correct all the language learners' errors.	5	4	3	2	1
35	I ask successful language learners to talk about their personal ways of progress in the classroom.	1	2	3	4	5
36	I expect my students to adjust themselves to my teaching rate.	5	4	3	2	1
37	The learners can form groups freely.	5	4	3	2	1
38	I do not make use of encouragement for my students` progress.	5	4	3	2	1

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EFL Learners' Vocabulary Acquisition in Translational Writing

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***Abstract*—Previously, researchers examined the effects of utilising monolingual dictionaries compared to bilingual and bilingualised dictionaries in an EFL learning environment as to their efficacy in improving culture-specific skills in translation. This study was set to investigate the comparative effects of using only monolingual dictionaries as opposed to using bilingualised dictionaries during vocabulary acquisition in a Translation course. Participants consisted of 60 Level II students of English. A test comprising 100 low-frequency words and 100 sentences manipulating each word as a translational writing task was administered at the end of the semester. Three experimental groups, one studying vocabulary with monolingual dictionaries, another with bilingual dictionaries, and a third with bilingualised dictionaries were used for checking the efficacy with which any/all of the three types of dictionaries can best help students acquire new lexicon. The study tested participants on their comprehension of and ability to use these words using sentences of their own on translational writing tasks. Results suggest that bilingualised dictionaries are more effective than monolingual and bilingual dictionaries and that bilingualised dictionaries are more effective than monolingual dictionaries, the last two dictionaries being the least effective. Suggestions for further work and implications for ELT pedagogy have been forwarded at the end.**

***Index Terms*—monolingual dictionaries, bilingual dictionaries, bilingualised dictionaries, vocabulary acquisition, translational writing tasks**

I. Introduction

Researchers and teachers concur that vocabulary-building is an essential part of learning a second/foreign language (Schmitt, 2008; Huckin & Coady, 1993; Read, 2000; Richards and Renandya, 2002; Bogaards and Laufer, 2004; Vilaça, 2009). In this vein, Bowen & Marks write on the significance of vocabulary learning:

"Words are the basic of language, and thus the basic of communication. Without words, it is possible to know everything about the grammatical structure of a language, but yet to be unable to make a single utterance." (Bowen & Marks, 2002, p. 106)

Vocabulary acquisition research has, however, suffered patent paucity when compared with other areas of research in second/foreign language. It is, therefore, not farfetched to declare that vocabulary teaching/learning has been treated as a supplementary task. In this vein, DeCarrico (2001, p. 285) declares, "...vocabulary has not always been recognized as a priority in language teaching."

With vocabulary being the skeleton of language-learning as such, vocabulary teaching and learning is a cycle of semantization and internalization, which is closely linked to and, to a large extent, dependent on the way in which a word is presented (van Els, et al. 1984). Some may consider consulting dictionaries a convenient way to present a large vocabulary. The use of dictionaries of all sorts is, subsequently, indispensable for second language acquisition, foreign language learning and natural language understanding (Pluempitiwiriyawej, Cercone & An, 2009; Christianson, 1997; Bogaards, Laufer & Varantola 1996; Guillot & Kenning, 1994; Atkins & Knowles, 1990). Knowing the use of a word, however, means not just knowing how it is defined in the dictionary, but how it relates to all the other words in the language, and how and when it may be used in sentences. This holds true because language users "rely on a large stock of words when they communicate" (Clark, 1995, p. 303). In a similar vein, McCarthy (1990), cited in Fan (2003) observed that "vocabulary forms the biggest part of the meaning of any language, and vocabulary is the biggest problem for most learners" in terms of learning and active language use. (p. 222)

Furthermore, earlier research on lexical acquisition indicated that vocabulary-learning is "the first step in the acquisition process and continues throughout the lifespan" (Mervis, 1983, p.210) and that the acquisition of syntax and grammatical rules come, consequently, at a later stage, to be acquired by approximately the age of puberty or thereabouts (Chomsky, 1965). Yet, lexical acquisition has received far less academic attention than syntactic acquisition, either in second language literature or in foreign language research (Erten & Tekin, 2008; Bruton, 2007; Yates and

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Kenkel, 2002; Prince, 1996). Even though the research base currently being pooled into literature on vocabulary learning is developing substantially, "much of it has been slow to filter into mainstream pedagogy" (Schmitt, 2008, p. 330).

In addition, research on using dictionaries for initiating and improving vocabulary- building and vocabulary use still looms large on the horizon (Atkins & Tübingen, 1998; Bruton, 2003). In this context, Mekheimer (2012, forthcoming) notes that, despite research scarcity, "there is growing momentum in current research for investigating the effects of dictionaries in the FL classroom", which began through seminal work by several researchers (Béjoint & Moulin, 1987; Snell-Hornby, 1984; Piotrowski, 1989; Bogaards, 1994; Hartmann, 1994; Bogaards, et al., 1996; Christianson, 1997; McAlpine & Myles, 2003).

Furthermore, some researchers demonstrated that the use of dictionaries as a pedagogical tool in vocabulary or translation classes can potentially be conducive to incidental vocabulary learning, including the retention of words that have been 'picked up' during listening and reading activities (Hummel, 2010; Macizo & Bajo, 2006; Bruton, 2007; Désilets, Melançon, Patenaude & Brunette, 2009; Fraser, 1999; Hulstijn et al., 1996; Knight, 1994; Luppescu and Day, 1993). Bruton (2007, p. 355) adroitly note that "the use of dictionaries and glossaries is very much the focus of interest, as is the incidental learning of vocabulary as a by-product of processing texts for the message". In addition, teachers and students of translation theoretically acquiesce that "the main purpose of a dictionary is to prevent or at least reduce communication conflicts which may arise from lexical deficit" (Burns, 1987, p. 21).

The significance of dictionary use for vocabulary acquisition and improving lexical comprehension in reading and writing tasks has been warranted by prior research. For example, some researchers (e.g., Swaffar, 1988; Carter, 1987; Al-Kufaishi, 2004; Koren, 1997; Krings, 1986; Faerch and Kasper, 1987; Fan, 2003) maintain that the use of ordinary dictionary look-up strategies while reading may help improve comprehension only when such strategies are practiced infrequently. Using monolingual dictionaries partially contextualised vocabulary acquisition in ways that...

"give detailed guidance on grammar, pronunciation, and usage; have definitions written in a controlled, simplified vocabulary; and even provide examples of words in context" (Oxford & Scarcella, 1994, p. 238).

In addition, harnessing dictionary work for improving vocabulary-use in teaching contextualised writing can be effective for ESL/EFL language improvement in general and writing competency in particular (Hulstijn, Hollander, Tine Greidanus, 1996; Christianson, 1997; Kojic-Sabo & Lightbown, 1999; Bell & LeBlanc, 2000; Muncie, 2002; Lee, 2003; Bruton, 2007; Çiftçi & Üster, 2009). Furthermore, some research suggests that translation might be an effective cognitive strategy for L_2 vocabulary learning (Hummel, 1995; Grellet, 1991; Malakoff & Hakuta, 1991; Prince, 1996; Laufer & Shmueli, 1997). Hence arises the significance of harnessing dictionary work to enhance translational writing and planned or incidental vocabulary acquisition (Lee, 2003; Folse, 2004; Yoshii, 2006; Bruton, 2007; Hummel, 2010).

II. Review of Literature

A. Studies of Dictionary Use by Language Learners

Research on dictionary work and its applications to classroom pedagogy in the ESL/EFL classroom has suffered from paucity. There has been, however, some research tapping into the efficacy of the use of dictionary work in the FL classroom, addressing a variety of research objectives in terms of their intended use and intended audience (e.g., "reference" vs. "production" dictionaries, Summers, 1995; Bruton, 2007; "decoding" vs. "encoding" dictionaries, Béjoint & Moulin, 1987; or "passive" vs. "active" dictionaries, Snell-Homby, 1987).

Some other research has dealt with the effects of teaching dictionary skills through focusing on specific language tasks, involving word/text production (see Hulstijn and Atkins, 1996 for an extensive review thereof). By the same token, Atkins and Varantola have reported on research they conducted to investigate the effects of dictionary consultation on translation tasks, indicating that dictionary use can be conducive to enhanced translation skills. Other studies have dealt with recognising the relationship between learner profiles (in terms of L_2 proficiency and exposure to dictionary training, etc.) and learners' success in using dictionaries, both bilingual and monolingual (Celce-Murcia and Rosenzweig, 1979; Ard, 1982; Atkins and Knowles, 1990; Summers, 1995).

In this vein, too, Atkins and Varantola (1997) explored task-specific ways of using dictionaries as a starting point for the creation of electronic dictionaries tailored to the needs of particular user groups, in this case student translators.

Much prior research has emphasised the importance and effectiveness of either bilingual or monolingual dictionaries through investigation into the behaviour of dictionary users for different tasks of vocabulary acquisition, use and improved translational writing tasks. But most of this research has assertively maintained that bilingual dictionaries can potentially cause lexical acquisition errors; for instance, Ard (1982) claimed that bilingual dictionaries "provoke errors" (p.5). Compatible with this view is the assertion by Celce-Murcia and Rosenzweig, who declared that bilingual dictionaries "are often misleading" (1979, p. 254). Summers commensurately concurred that "bilingual dictionaries can cause problems and even errors" (1995, p. 25). This finding has been consistently reported by many authors in different research studies (Ard, 1982; Béjoint & Moulin, 1987; Herbst & Stein, 1987; Maingay & Rundell, 1987; Meara & English, 1987;Tomaszczyk, 1987). According to some authors, however, (e.g., Meara & English, 1987; Tomaszczyk, 1987), skilful dictionary use could result in the avoidance of these errors. At least 30% of the errors are liable to be averted via the 'appropriate' use of a dictionary in translational writing (Herbst and Stein, 1987; Christianson, 1997).

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By the same token, Meara and English, in their research, too, affirmed that bilingual dictionaries "were often ineffective, in that the entries either failed to prevent an obvious error or actually reinforced error" (1987, p. 2). Thompson could explain the reason for that being that bilingual dictionaries "reinforce the belief in a one-on-one relationship at word level between two languages" (Thompson, 1987, p. 282), translation students are oftentimes interested in coming up with Translation Language (TL) equivalents to the words in the Source Language (SL) text at the disintegrated, fragmentary level, but not at the syntacto-semantic and pragmatic levels of the text (Béjoint & Moulin, 1987; Hartmann, 1987; Snell-Homby, 1987; Summers, 1995; Webb, 2007). This has been extensively observed in practical translation classes with Arabic-speaking students studying translation when they resort to glossing single words in Arabic over the text. But, research as well as common sense has proven the ineffectiveness of the glossing strategy, using Arabic translations for single words (Webb, 2007; Al-dosari & Mekheimer, 2010).

Atkins and Varantola (1997) pointed out that there are several research studies whose results suggest that dictionaries which contain both definitions and equivalents (bilingualised dictionaries) are best suited to the needs of student translators. It should be noted that research findings have indicated that bilingualised dictionaries are more effective for both beginners and advanced learners of EFL, either by use of traditional, hard-copy dictionaries (e.g. Laufer and Hadar, 1997; Laufer and Kimmel, 1997) or by electronic dictionaries available online, which give access to e-translators in the target language (Hull & Grefenstetter, 1996; Ballesteros & Croft, 2003; Honglan, 2005; Provaznikova, 2009; Aldosari & Mekheimer, 2010). Some researchers further claim that the quality of a translation can be contributed to the functionality of users' dictionary skills as well as to the quality of the dictionaries used by these users (Varantola, 1998; Mackintosh, 1998; Roberts, 1990; Corpas et al., 2001). Yet, trainee students 'need more training and, therefore, instruction in dictionary use' (Ramos, 2005).

B. Dictionaries, Translation and Writing

One significant study that has been conducted to tap into the effects of vocabulary learning resultant from dictionary work in FL classroom and collaborative EFL translational writing is that of Bruton (2007). The study suggested that the use of dictionary support in L_1-L_2 writing translational tasks involving whole class collaboration can be conducive to "significant vocabulary knowledge gains" (Bruton, 2007, p. 362). The study also suggested that translational tasks completed in convergent communal collaborative writing situations can potentially foster contextualized bilingual dictionary use, which can also be conducive to enhancing language writing. Furthermore, and more importantly, the use of such translational tasks are thought to be challenging enough to provide "prompt extended oral interactions and language processing in the target language", eventually resulting in integrated language teaching/learning (Ibid.).

Though resorting to the first language is not encouraged by language teachers when teaching language skills, there is a process described as language switching (L-S) which can occur naturally in L_1 writing tasks, given that an L_2 writer has "two languages or more at his or her disposal" (Woodall, 2002, p. 8). In this vein, Woodall (Ibid.) defines language switching (L-S) as "any non-instructed use of the first language during the L_2 writing process". Woodall (2002), however, differentiates between two processes of language-switching: the spontaneous, non-prescribed use of L_1 in L_2 writing, and another instructed, prescribed language-switching that occurs in translational writing tasks. Woodall (2002) describes L-S that occurs in translational writing as ...

"{t}he act of translating a previously written L_1 text into an L_2 text (*that*) might be construed as an instance of using the first language during the production of L_2 text ... since it is an essential part of the defined task ..., it is instructed use of the L_1." (p. 8)

L-S as used in L_2 writing was investigated in prior research (e.g., Jones & Tetroe, 1987; Cummings, 1989; Qi, 1998; Manchon, Roca de Larios & Murphy, 2000; Zimmermann, 2000). Much of this research indicated that learners resort to L-S as a problem-solving strategy to manipulate L_1 in facilitated tasks or by less proficient learners, whereas advanced writers seldom resort to L-S. Some researchers concluded that "the use of the first language in second language composition was principally a matter of vocabulary" (Jones & Tetroe, 1987, p. 54)

There was some earlier research, however, which involved the use of L_1 translational tasks to solve linguistic problems related to vocabulary acquisition/learning (Kobayashi & Rinnert, 1992; Beare, 2000; Centeno-Cortés & Jiménez Jiménez, 2004; Cumming, 1989; Jones & Tetroe, 1987; Lay, 1982; Wang, 2003; Woodall, 2002; Cohen & Brooks-Carson, 2001). This research views L_1 use as a strategy which writers employ during L_2 writing, mainly in the form of translating from L_1 to L_2, inducing to enhanced writing in L_2 (Weijen, Bergh, Rijlaarsdam & Sanders, 2009).

Other research, however, reported dubiously contradictory results; several studies reported that high proficiency writers switched more frequently between L_1 and L_2 than low proficiency writers (Wang, 2003). In this vein, Cumming (1989) concluded that expert writers used L_1 frequently during word searches, but according to another study by Sasaki and Hirose (1996), weak writers reported translating more from L_1 to L_2 while writing than good writers. Subsequent replicas by Sasaki (2002, 2004), however, found that novice writers translated more often from L_1 to L_2 than expert writers. By the same token, Wang and Wen (2002) concluded that lower proficiency writers tend to use L_1 far more than higher proficiency writers.

These findings are commensurate with other research in which learners made use of translating from L_1 to L_2 in order to compensate for their limited ability to write in L_2 (Wolfersberger, 2003; Woodall, 2002). Such results suggested that less proficient L_2 learners switched to L_1 more frequently than more advanced learners, and that more difficult tasks increased the frequency of L_1 use in L_2 writing. Much of the research earlier cited has centred on error analysis of the

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pre-post comparisons of students' written products; the focus on errors was based in relation to accuracy scores that "may represent learning outcomes" as Bruton (2007, p. 355) explained.

Conversely, some research has indicated that explicit vocabulary instruction, as with using monolingual dictionaries, can result in greater use of contextually appropriate word choice, which can lead to enhanced subsequent writing, enriched content and improved sentence structure (Duin, 1983; Laufer, 1994; Muncie, 2001).

III. The Present Study

A. Purpose

Motivated by prior research by Laufer and Hadar (1997) conducted to assess the efficacy of monolingual, bilingual, and bilingualised dictionaries in comprehension and the production of new words, the objective of this research was to evaluate the efficacy of each type of dictionary used in relation to the volume of vocabulary that is retained and further used by students who define words by dictionary while working on translational writing tasks.

This research replicated the idea underlying the study by Laufer and Hadar (1997), yet adopted a different line of procedures. That is, this study sought to recognise which type of dictionary, monolingual, bilingual, or bilingualised, would lend to the easy comprehensibility of lexicon and, subsequently, to the use of this lexicon in creative translational writing tasks, using a post-treatment, vocabulary/sentence translation test.

B. Participants

Three groups of learners (n = 60) constituted the participants of this study. One group consisted of 20 students studying Translation I (ENG 240, an introductory course in translation theory and practice) by utilising monolingual dictionaries; the second group consisted of 20 students manipulating bilingual dictionaries for the same course; and the third group consisted of 20 students who used bilingualised dictionaries in their study of Translation I during the second semester of the 2010 academic year. The students were in the intermediate level of English proficiency and their passing grades for the previous year ranged from A (highest) to D (lowest), homogeneously skewed towards a C grade (where 62.8% obtained a C, 3.7% obtained an A, 4.81% obtained a B, and 28.59% obtained a D). The native tongue of the participants is Arabic and they had been learning English, typically, for nine years.

C. Materials

1. Vocabulary/Sentence Translation Test

The test consisted of 100 lexical items deemed as infrequent and which were likely to be unfamiliar to the students (e.g., *abrade, risible, hoodwink, conjugate, virago, regalia, rancor, consummate, cull, recure, pauper, obviate, purloin, ichthyic, pedant, galore, ire, forefend*, etc.), with each item comprising of a stem word with four alternatives and the target word being used in a sentence indicant of its meaning which was then required to be translated into Arabic by the subjects.

Given that the objective behind this investigation was to investigate the possible acquisition of new vocabulary through translating this vocabulary into L_2 equivalents, the use of translational tasks together with multiple-choice test items had been manipulated for particular reasons. Firstly, translation requires writing, in this case in the native language, Arabic. Secondly, translation tasks strongly motivate EFL learners to use unfamiliar vocabulary in contextualised situations, with more attention paid to the task. In this vein, some researchers (e.g., Uzawa, 1996; Kobayashi and Rinnert, 1992; Swain and Lapkin, 1995; Bruton & Broca, 1997; Bruton, 2004; 2007) have demonstrated that learners in translational tasks focus more on vocabulary learning and use through the novel, original reproduction of words more than is the case in open compositions tasks.

One criterion for making these lexical selections included interrater judgements of 5 Departmental Instructors as to the familiarity of the words to students at this level in the Department; another was comparing them to *The American Heritage Word Frequency Book* (Carroll, 1971).

The test was piloted with a group of 30 students of the same intermediate level, not enrolled in ENG 240 to determine the reliability of the test (manipulating the Kuder-Richardson formula, where KR21 = 0.70). The results confirm the researcher's presumption that the words were unfamiliar to the participants after the administration of the vocabulary test. The researcher, who administered the test online using the Blackboard® *Evaluate* facility in a connected computer laboratory, asked the participants whether they had seen the vocabulary items on the test before or not and they responded negatively; that the vocabulary was new to them.

In Group A (Monolingual dictionaries), the participants used the Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English; in Group B (Bilingual dictionaries), the Al-Mawrid dictionary was utilised; while in the third group, Group C (Bilingualised dictionaries), the Oxford Wordpower was used.

2. Translation Passages

For the duration of ten sessions, ten translation sentences from Arabic into English with highlighting glossaries added to the margins of the passages served as translation training material for the monolingual group (Group A). The same material was used for the bilingualised dictionary group (Group C), with Arabic semantic equivalents added to the glossaries. For the second group (Group B), only Arabic equivalents were given to the target vocabulary. In addition, students had the opportunity to use dictionaries of the type allocated to their respective groups.

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D. Procedures

In ten sessions, the students were exposed to the 100 vocabulary items which were manipulated for the Vocabulary/Sentence Translation Test, through the provision of 10 items in each passage per session. The students were given two sessions a week and the experiment lasted for five weeks. Each group was asked to use the English glossaries, glossaries with Arabic, or Arabic equivalents only and they were asked to use the allocated dictionaries according to the group in which they were. At the end of the training, the participants were given the Vocabulary/Translation Test to determine which type of dictionary is more effective in enhancing vocabulary learning and vocabulary production in novel translational tasks.

Due to technological difficulties with the integration of the translational task below each question item, the multiple-choice stem/alternatives questions were given first and the translational tasks were later given in another testing session as essay questions which were individually subjectively rated by the instructor and then by another instructor in the Department, with the two marks being added and then divided by two to obtain a mean mark for each question.

The multiple-choice questions were used to evaluate the participants' lexical comprehension, while the translational tasks were used to evaluate their production skills.

IV. Results

To ascertain whether there were any differences between the three groups in terms of the efficacy of the three types of dictionaries used by the participants of the study, mean scores and standard deviations were calculated for the overall performance of the participants in the three groups in relation to the both the skills of comprehension and production of the lexicon learned during the translational tasks.

The means and standard deviations were calculated separately; first for lexical comprehension determined by a mark given to vocabulary test items and second for production through calculating the mean scores and standard deviations for translational sentences. Table 1 below displays the results:

TABLE 1:
MEAN AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS OF THE SCORES OBTAINED BY MONOLINGUAL, BILINGUAL, AND BILINGUALISED DICTIONARY USERS:

Skills	**Monolingual (n = 20)**		**Bilingual (n = 20)**		**Bilingualised (n = 20)**	
	M	**SD**	**M**	**SD**	**M**	**SD**
Lexical Comprehension	6.6	0.95	7.2	0.75	7.75	0.76
Production	7.1	0.91	6.44	0.89	7.78	0.92

The above table shows that the mean scores of the participants' performance on the Vocabulary/Sentence Translation Test were good, on average, confirming that all three treatments (the different types of dictionary) were effective instructional tools for presenting novel vocabulary during translational tasks.

The mean scores and standard deviations for each group, however, show some level of variation between groups. For example, the statistics in Table 1 above show that the bilingual dictionary usage group was the lowest performing group of the three. One-way ANOVA was, therefore, calculated for the mean scores of the participants in the three groups as demonstrated in Table (2) below.

TABLE 2:
ONE-WAY ANOVA OF THE MEAN SCORES OF THE THREE GROUPS ON LEXICAL COMPREHENSION AND PRODUCTION

Source	SS	DF	Mean	F value	Sign.
Between groups	7.43	2	3.715	5.39	*0.007
Within groups	39.25	57	0.688		
Total	46.68	59			

Tabular F = 3.17

The table above shows that the calculated F value is greater than the tabular F value ($\alpha = 0.05$), indicating that there are statistically significant differences between the three groups. To recognise which group differences were more significant than others (i.e., to determine where the differences lie), a Scheffé post-comparison test was used (See Tables 3 & 4 on the following page).

TABLE 3:
SCHEFFÉ'S POST HOC COMPARISONS AMONG PAIRS OF MEANS FOR THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN GROUPS ON LEXICAL COMPREHENSION

Groups	Mean	Monolingual	Bilingual	Bilingualised
Monolingual	6.6		*0.30-	*0.85-
Bilingual	7.2			*0.55-
Bilingualised	7.75			

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TABLE 4:
SCHEFFÉ'S POST HOC COMPARISONS AMONG PAIRS OF MEANS FOR THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN GROUPS ON PRODUCTION ON TRANSLATIONAL TASKS

Groups	Mean	Monolingual	Bilingual	Bilingualised
Monolingual	7.1		*0.28-	*0.89-
Bilingual	6.44			*0.66-
Bilingualised	7.78			

The tables above show that there are statistically significant differences between the monolingual dictionary group and the other bilingual groups to the advantage of the monolingual group on both lexical comprehension *and* production in translational tasks. There are also statistically significant differences detected between the bilingualised dictionary use-group on the one hand and the monolingual and bilingual dictionary use-groups on the other to the advantage of the bilingualised dictionary use-group on both comprehension and production. These findings are diagrammatically demonstrated in figure 1 below:

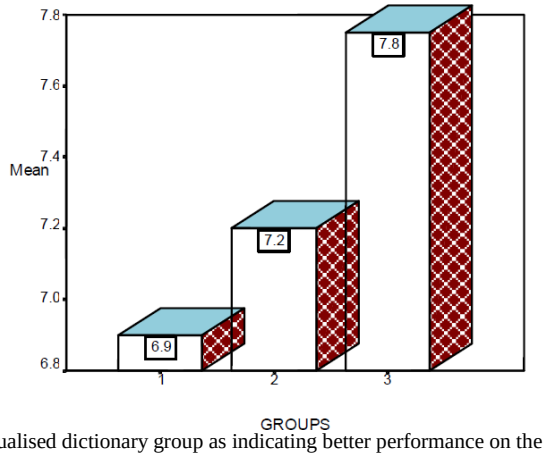

Figure 1: Means of the bilingualised dictionary group as indicating better performance on the Vocabulary/Translation Test

V. DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

Monolingual dictionaries as well as bilingualised dictionaries, it was revealed, are useful tools for guiding language learners through checking and/or looking up the relevant lexical or semantic information and learning new vocabulary – a function that is not available with bilingual dictionaries. Al Dosari & Mekheimer explain this as follows:

"Entries in monolingual dictionaries normally provide more elaborate and precise information about the word than do bilingual dictionaries; e.g., monolingual dictionaries detail information about idiomatic usage, common collocations, connotations and register, etymology of lexicon, and illustrations and examples that can efficiently guide learners into appropriate or correct usage." (p. 546)

Findings of the present study, commensurate with those of Laufer and Hadar's (1997) also indicated that bilingualised dictionary consultation has resulted in significantly better performance for comprehension and production in translational writing tasks. As Laufer and Hadar (1997) plausibly explained it:

"the combination of the monolingual information containing a definition and examples with a translation of the new word into the learner's mother tongue tends to produce the best results." (p. 195)

EFL teachers and researchers, therefore, recommend the use of monolingual dictionaries over bilingual dictionaries (Yorkey, 1970; Baxter, 1980; Ard, 1982; Snell-Hornby, 1984; Bloch, 1985; Hartmann, 1989; Stein, 1990). According to several researchers (Yorkey, 1970; Snell-Hornby, 1984; Aust, Kelley & Roby, 1993), the rationale for this recommendation could be that bilingual dictionaries "... are counterproductive because they culturate the erroneous assumption that there is a one-to-one correspondence between the words of the two languages" (Snell-Hornby, 1984, p. 280).

Unlike Laufer and Hadar's (1997) taxonomy of the sample into pre-advanced and advanced users or average and good users, there is no such dichotomy of the sample in this study. These researchers' sample is homogenous in terms of proficiency and academic level based on their academic records available at the registrar's office. The results show clearly that good dictionary users could benefit from the monolingual information as well as from Arabic equivalents available in this type of dictionary in both tasks of lexical understanding and production of novel sentences in translational task. This again warrants Laufer and Hadar's results as well as Laufer and Kimmel's (1995) results, confirming that "the good dictionary users are those who can benefit from both parts of the entry." (Laufer and Hadar, 1997, p. 195).

The results also support the assumption that the use of monolingual as well as bilingualised dictionary work can contribute to significant vocabulary knowledge gains in and through writing on EFL translational tasks, thus lending support to prior research findings indicating that the contextualized bilingual dictionary can be useful for improving

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translational writing (Luppescu and Day, 1993; Knight, 1994; Hulstijn et al., 1996; Christianson, 1997; Kojic-Sabo & Lightbown, 1999; Bell & LeBlanc, 2000; Muncie, 2002; Lee, 2003; Bruton, 2005; 2007;D ésilets, Melan çon, Patenaude & Brunette, 2009; Çiftçi & Üster, 2009; Hummel, 2010).

Here evidenced as the least useful for vocabulary learning, lexical understanding and production in translational tasks, bilingual dictionaries are only "ideal for quick consultation, or when the learner/translator seeks an appropriate equivalent lexeme in the translation language if the right word eludes memory" (Al-dosari & Mekheimer, 2010, p, 547), while monolingual dictionaries, though more elaborate and, therefore, time-consuming, have the advantage of directly introducing the user to the lexical system of the L_2 (B éjoint and Moulin, 1987; Jennings, 1967).

VI. Conclusions and Pedagogical Implications

Bilingualised dictionaries have been proven to be more effective, than monolingual dictionaries. This indicates that these dictionaries are more user-friendly and can provide adequate linguistic information in more than one language which can comfortably be used by FL learners. Illustrative examples and contextualised vocabulary models not only help language learners acquire new vocabulary but can also lead to incidental vocabulary learning of word collocations and derivatives as well as synonyms and antonyms in and through model sentences. This further helps in improving translational writing skills. As such, it is recommended that translation teachers advise students to use bilingualised dictionaries in translation classes, being "suitable for all types of learners". (Laufer & Hadar, 1997, p. 195)

In addition, given that the quality of a translation depends on the users' dictionary skills and also on the quality of the dictionaries, additional sources that provide various types of text bases, such as model examples and corpora of parallel texts can be used.

Furthermore, results from this study as well as from prior research bolster our understanding of user behaviour of look-up and problem-solving strategies in translational tasks, especially with regard to the needs and preferences for use of dictionaries in such tasks (Faerch and Kasper, 1987; Fan, 2003).

In conclusion, investigations into natural translator training environments, including the use of reference works and corpora for translation training, are needed to be conducted to provide insights for translation students, practitioners and lexicographers.

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The Effect of Setting Reading Goals on the Vocabulary Retention of Iranian EFL Learners

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***Abstract*—This study investigates the effects of setting reading goals on the vocabulary retention of Iranian EFL readers. The aim is to find out which type of goals can be more influential on vocabulary retention. The population includes 120 students, 16 to 18 years old, and all female at Iranian junior high schools. Out of them 60 homogenized students were selected through administering one Nelson Proficiency Test (2001). They were divided to four groups of 15 students, three groups with different reading goals and a control group. After the treatment, a vocabulary post test was administered for all groups after two weeks. Then an ANOVA used to analyze the results of the tests. The results revealed that there was a significant difference between the groups with different goals and the control group. The findings suggested that setting reading goals has a positive effect on vocabulary retention of teaching and pleasure groups and negative effect on taking test group.**

***Index Terms*—reading goal, reading comprehension, vocabulary learning, retention, L2 text**

I. Introduction

Skilled adult readers consider reading goals as an important factor on how to read. Setting reading goals affects the pace of reading and influences on the style of reading as the literature indicates (Pressley, Brown, El-Dinary, & Afflerbach, 1995; Pressley & Afflerbach, 1995; Wyatt et al., 1993). A consistent relationship was found between reading goals and reading strategy by Taraban, Rynearson and Kerr (2000). Successfully learning from text depends heavily on reading goals, but no researches have been found worked on whether providing a learner with a specific reading goal will improve learning from text. The purpose of this study is to determine if giving learners explicit reading goals, can improve their learning. Although goal orientation as a motivational characteristic of the learner has been addressed in previous studies, none have considered the effect of setting reading goals on the vocabulary retention.

This research focuses on the following research hypotheses:

1- Setting a reading goal before reading has no effect on the vocabulary retention of EFL high school students.

2. Setting different reading goals has no effect on the vocabulary retention of EFL high school students.

In this study three reading goals have be considered: reading for pleasure, reading for taking test, and reading for teaching other students.

II. Method

A. Participants

To select the participants of the study, a group of 120 students were selected randomly from among the third grade students in a high school in Iran, Najaf-Abad city. Subsequently, a proficiency test was administered to all the participants to make four homogeneous groups in terms of their proficiency level. After scoring the test, 60 students whose score range fell between one standard deviation (SD) above and below the mean were selected to participate in the study. These participants were divided into four homogeneous groups, each consisted of 15 students, based on their proficiency level. They included a control group and three experimental groups.

B. Materials

Through the various phases of the study, the following materials were used.

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1. Nelson Proficiency Test

In order to find out the general English proficiency level of the subjects of the study a Nelson proficiency test(2001) was selected (from the lower intermediate section of the Practice test II) and was administered on the whole population to choose the control and experimental groups.

2. Vocabulary pre-test

In order to study the amount of vocabulary retention among the third grade students of high school studying English as a foreign language, the control and experimental groups were supposed to read three short stories each containing 15 unfamiliar words in three different sessions. To find out whether the participants in control and experimental groups were familiar with these words, the list of the new words found in the short stories, consisting of 50 items was given to them and they were asked to write the L1 meaning of the words. Most of the words were unfamiliar to the students. Those vocabulary items which were familiar for the participants (5 items) were deleted and those which were unknown to the participants were identified to be considered in the study.

3. Short stories

Three short stories suitable for lower intermediate students containing the unfamiliar words were selected and their readability was computed which was reasonable.

4. Vocabulary Tests

During the treatment phase of the study, after each session of reading a short story, a vocabulary test was run. The tests were constructed by the researchers and piloted on other students at the same level of knowledge. The reliability of these tests was calculated through KR-21 and they were 0.75, 0.84, and 0.70. The validity of the tests was confirmed by two experts in the field.

5. Vocabulary post-test

At the end of the treatment phase (after a two weeks interval), a post-test was administered to students of the experimental and control groups in which they were asked to write the meaning of those vocabulary items which were already unfamiliar with, to evaluate the amount of the retention of the new words.

C. Procedure

Following the proficiency test (Nelson test II , 2001), four homogeneous groups were identified to participate in the study.

1. Pilot study

The prepared vocabulary tests were piloted to another group of third grade students in high school similar in English proficiency level to the experimental and control groups. The reliability of these tests was calculated through KR-21. Two experts in the fields confirmed the validity of the tests.

2. Vocabulary pre-test

In this phase of the study, a list of 50 new vocabulary items found in the short stories which were considered to be used in the treatment part of the study was selected and given to participants in four groups. Regarding the knowledge level of students who were studying in third grade of high school and considering the vocabulary items which were covered in their textbooks so far, the items which seemed to be unfamiliar to the participants were selected and they were asked to write their meaning in their native language (Persian). After the process of item analysis, 5 vocabulary items which were familiar to the participants were deleted and 45 words were considered in the next phase of the study.

3. Treatment

In this phase of the study, the experimental and the control groups were given three short stories, each story in one session, and they were asked to read each short story with special goal like pleasure, taking test, and teaching other students except the control group with no pre-set goal. The students' questions in understanding short stories were answered. They read the texts during a period of 15 minutes of the class time. After reading, each group was required to do a specific activity. One group was required to take a test, the other group was asked to teach to the other students and the pleasure group was required to tell the gist of the story. Then all the groups were asked to answer ten multiple choice questions related to the short stories without informing them before. The reliability of these tests was calculated through KR-21 and they were 0.75, 0.84, and 0.70. The validity of the tests was confirmed by two experts.

4. Vocabulary post-test

In order to measure the amount of the vocabulary retention by the experimental groups and to compare it with the control group, a vocabulary post-test was administered to four groups, similar in form to the pre-test, in which they were asked to write the meaning of 45 vocabulary items in their L1 for thirty minutes, two weeks later. It included the same words in the pretest and the new words in the short stories. The post-test was administered without informing the participants in advance.

D. Scoring of the Tests and Data Analysis

The pre-test contained 50 vocabulary items and students were supposed to write their L1 meanings based on the instruction. The post-test contained 45 vocabulary items with the same instruction. In order to score these tests, one mark was considered for each correct L1 meaning and no mark for those vocabulary items which were left blank or answered wrongly by the participants.

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E. Data Analyses

After the collection of the required data, the scores of the participants on all tests were processed using the statistical package for the social sciences (SPSS, version 9). Specifically, the following analyses were conducted: descriptive statistics, ANOVA and post hoc test. The obtained data of the study will be displayed in the following tables.

TABLE 1.
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF THE THREE TREATMENTS

			N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean	
							Lower Bound	Upper Bound
treatment1	teaching_group		15	18.4000	1.29835	.33523	17.6810	19.1190
	taking_test		15	15.8667	1.84649	.47676	14.8441	16.8892
	pleasure _reading		15	17.8000	1.42428	.36775	17.0113	18.5887
	control_group		15	17.2000	2.17781	.56231	15.9940	18.4060
	Total		60	17.3167	1.92655	.24872	16.8190	17.8143
	Model	Fixed Effects			1.72240	.22236	16.8712	17.7621
		Random Effects				.54186	15.5922	19.0411
treatment2	teaching_group		15	18.9333	1.03280	.26667	18.3614	19.5053
	taking_test		15	16.2000	1.74028	.44934	15.2363	17.1637
	pleasure _reading		15	17.6667	1.67616	.43278	16.7384	18.5949
	control_group		15	16.6667	1.83874	.47476	15.6484	17.6849
	Total		60	17.3667	1.88632	.24352	16.8794	17.8540
	Model	Fixed Effects			1.60357	.20702	16.9520	17.7814
		Random Effects				.60522	15.4406	19.2928
treatment3	teaching_group		15	18.9333	.88372	.22817	18.4439	19.4227
	taking_test		15	16.4667	1.92230	.49634	15.4021	17.5312
	pleasure _reading		15	17.8000	1.42428	.36775	17.0113	18.5887
	control_group		15	15.1333	1.92230	.49634	14.0688	16.1979
	Total		60	17.0833	2.11766	.27339	16.5363	17.6304
	Model	Fixed Effects			1.59687	.20616	16.6704	17.4963
		Random Effects				.82254	14.4656	19.7010
post_test	teaching_group		15	18.1333	1.55226	.40079	17.2737	18.9929
	taking_test		15	12.6000	2.29285	.59201	11.3303	13.8697
	pleasure _reading		15	17.1333	1.55226	.40079	16.2737	17.9929
	control_group		15	13.2000	3.48876	.90079	11.2680	15.1320
	Total		60	15.2667	3.33887	.43105	14.4041	16.1292
	Model	Fixed Effects			2.35837	.30446	14.6568	15.8766
		Random Effects				1.38698	10.8527	19.6806

Considering the mean scores of four groups in each treatment (table 1), the teaching group gained the highest means. It is considerable that the mean of taking test group is lower than control group in treatment 1, 2 and in delayed post-test.

TABLE 2.
ANOVA

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
treatment1	Between Groups	52.850	3	17.617	5.938	.001
	Within Groups	166.133	56	2.967		
	Total	218.983	59			
treatment2	Between Groups	65.933	3	21.978	8.547	.000
	Within Groups	144.000	56	2.571		
	Total	209.933	59			
treatment3	Between Groups	121.783	3	40.594	15.919	.000
	Within Groups	142.800	56	2.550		
	Total	264.583	59			
post_test	Between Groups	346.267	3	115.422	20.752	.000
	Within Groups	311.467	56	5.562		
	Total	657.733	59			

Table 2 shows that since the statistics referring to significant difference between the groups is smaller than 0.05 in all treatments, there is a significant difference in the performance of the four groups on vocabulary retention. Therefore the

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first hypothesis of the research (Setting a reading goal before reading has no effect on the vocabulary retention of EFL high school students) is rejected. This implies the fact that setting different reading goals affects the subjects' retention ability.

1. Post Hoc test

TABLE 3.
MULTIPLE COMPARISONS OF THE LEARNERS' MEANS WITH DIFFERENT READING GOALS

Scheffe

(I) group	(J) group	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
teaching group	test group	3.32*	.429	.000	2.08	4.55
	pleasure group	1.00	.429	.155	-.24	2.24
	control group	3.05*	.429	.000	1.81	4.29
test group	teaching group	-3.32*	.429	.000	-4.55	-2.08
	pleasure group	-2.32*	.429	.000	-3.55	-1.08
	control group	-.27	.429	.943	-1.50	.97
pleasure group	teaching group	-1.00	.429	.155	-2.24	.24
	test group	2.32*	.429	.000	1.08	3.55
	control group	2.05*	.429	.000	.81	3.29
control group	teaching group	-3.05*	.429	.000	-4.29	-1.81
	test group	.27	.429	.943	-.97	1.50
	pleasure group	-2.05*	.429	.000	-3.29	-.81

Based on observed means.

*. The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

The second hypothesis was concerned with the question of whether there is any relationship between the different reading goals and EFL learners' retention. Considering table 3 and by comparing the control group and the other groups, the mean difference of control and teaching group is 3.05 and this is significant (0.00 is smaller than 0.05). This shows that there is a significant difference between the means of the group with teaching goal and the control group.

The mean difference of control and pleasure groups is -2.05 and it is significant (0.00 < 0.05). But the mean difference of control and test group is 0.27 and it is not significance (0.943>.05). This shows that there is not a significant difference between the means of the test group and the control group. These results indicate that setting different goals have different effects on the means of each group. Although, teaching and pleasure goals have significant positive effects on the means of the students, testing goal has no significant effect on mean (even based on the descriptive statistics of table 1 the means of the test groups in treatments and post test are lower than the control and of course other groups). Therefore, the mean difference between groups shows that the mean of control group is lower than teaching and pleasure groups and the means of control and testing groups has no significant difference.

III. DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION, AND IMPLICATION

The post-test results of the teaching and pleasure groups, as indicated by the descriptive statistics were higher than the results obtained by the control group. Therefore, it can be claimed that the subjects who participated in the reading activity with setting reading goals (for teaching and pleasure) seemed to have learned the meaning of more words than those in the control group. The results of the study indicate the importance of setting reading goals before reading. As Rivers (1981) notes, vocabulary cannot be taught although it can be explained, presented, demonstrated along with other techniques and activities, and must be learned by individuals.

As stated before, this study investigated two hypotheses: 1. Setting a reading goal before reading has no effect on the vocabulary retention of EFL high school students. The findings of this study rejected this hypothesis. In other words, by comparing the results obtained by experimental groups, it is clear that there are significant differences between the retention of these groups and the control group. It shows that setting reading goal before reading has a significant effect on vocabulary retention of students; of course, positive effect for those with teaching and pleasure reading goals and negative effect for those with taking test goal. The results show that taking test goal not only does not increase the students capacity to recall the words better but also decrease the level of their performance. It can be because of the students' stress of taking test.

The second hypothesis stated: Setting different reading goals has no effect on the vocabulary retention of EFL high school students. Referring back to table 3 and considering the results of descriptive statistics and one way ANOVA of the post-test in table 2 this hypothesis is rejected. The amount of retention of vocabulary in the participants possessing teaching goals and pleasure goals is higher than control group. Unlike teaching group and pleasure group there is a lower retention of vocabulary in taking test group comparing with control group.

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There were some limitations in this study. The first problem dealt with the reluctance of a few less-enthusiastic and less-motivated students to participate in the study, i.e. to read short stories for taking test, teaching the other students and for pleasure. The reason behind this unwillingness may be due to the current situation of educational evaluation in Iran. Students have gradually been accustomed to the procedure of "read for score" and in most cases, the only criteria for passing the course, here in Iran, are the score, which is often obtained from the written examinations regardless of other capabilities of the learners.

These findings have clear implications for the future studies.

1- The participants of this study were the third graders in high school in Iran. This study can be replicated with TEFL students at the university and the results can be compared with this study and other studies.

2- In this study, one-word units were mostly tested. Similar research with multi-word units also needs to be done.

3- The number of vocabulary considered in this study was 45 words. This study may be replicated with either fewer or more words at different levels and the results can be compared.

4- In this study, "vocabulary retention" in the experimental and control groups was studied by only one post-test. More retention tests with different elapse of finite times can be addressed in future studies and the retention of vocabulary can be compared to see whether the results are stable or not.

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The Effect of Scaffolding Technique in Journal Writing among the Second Language Learners

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***Abstract*—It was noted that one of the most distressing challenges faced by the L2 college students was the poor presentation of their journal writing skills. The researcher noticed a prevailing pattern in their journal writing, where most of them were unable to construct proper sentences, making too many grammatical errors and also lacking in vocabulary. These factors have eventually restricted them from expressing their ideas clearly and effectively in their journal writing. Therefore, this study is primarily designed to look at how second language learners have acquired the use of English language through journal writing and how they have improved within a short time frame. The researcher scaffold a number of 3 undergraduate university college students by using several interactive writing techniques and instructions in writing a journal which showed their progress, daily activities and new experiences. The writing errors from the samples of written journals during week 1 were as it was written before and during the scaffolding period. Data were collected and the results of the progression were obtained based on the observation and comparison of written journals on week 1 and 5. The scaffolding technique presented in this study has helped remedy the challenges faced by the target students by further developing their effectiveness in journal writing.**

***Index Terms*—scaffolding, second language learners, journal writing skills, interactive writing skills, English language learner**

I. Introduction

Effective journal writing skills are important to the personal and professional development of second language (L2) college students. These skills are necessary for them to recognize their journal writing strengths and venture further into the areas for improvement. However, it was noted that one of the most distressing challenges faced by the L2 college students was the poor presentation of their journal writing skills. We noticed a prevailing pattern in their journal writing, where most of them were unable to construct proper sentences, making too many grammatical errors and also lacking in vocabulary. These factors have eventually restricted them from expressing their ideas clearly and effectively in their journal writing.

In the classroom, scaffolding is a process by which a teacher provides students with a temporary framework for learning. When scaffolding is done correctly, students are encouraged to develop their own creativity, motivation, and resourcefulness. As students gather knowledge and increase their skills on their own, fundamentals of the framework are dismantled. At the completion of the lesson, the scaffolding is removed altogether and students no longer need it (Lawson, 2002). Walqui (2002) maintained that scaffolding can be thought of as three related pedagogical scales:

1. Providing a support structure to the students to enable certain activities and skills to develop.
2. Carrying out particular activities in class.
3. Providing assistance in moment-to- moment interaction.

Scaffolding is an instructional technique whereby the teacher models the desired learning strategy or task and then gradually shifts responsibility to the students. This type of interaction is consistent with Vygotsky's (1978) belief that learning is a social process and not an individual one, and it occurs when students interact with their teacher and with one another in the classroom.

Although Vygotsky (1978) did not use the term scaffolding, it does have a theoretical basis in his description of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). He defined the ZPD as the distance between the actual development level of the learner, as determined by independent problem solving, and the level of potential development, as determined through problem solving under teacher guidance and interaction and collaboration with more capable student peers (Doolittle, 1997). The ZPD is represented in a model with four stages (Tharp & Gallimore, 1988). This model illustrates the scaffolding process and it represents the relationship between teacher and student interaction in group settings. ZPD

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stages defined by Herber and Herber (1993) in stage 1 of the ZPD or scaffolding, there is frequent teacher and student interaction because the teacher needs to provide the student with the literal facts, details, key names, and dates related to the concepts or ideas being taught. In stage 2, students work together in small groups, and the teacher provides them with activities that encourage interpretation through metacognition or the knowledge of when and how to use certain strategies to solve writing related problems and teacher's guided practice. In stages 3 and 4, the students continue to work together and independently while applying the information that they have learned to new ideas and concepts.

Scaffolding techniques have been used in many studies and have shown positive results. According to Mitchell and Myles (2004), the domain where learning can most productively take place is christened the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), that is, the domain of knowledge or skill where the learner is not yet capable of independent functioning, but can achieve the desired outcome given relevant scaffolded help from the teachers or mentors. Thus the learners current stage in learning could be develop further by providing proper guidance through scaffolding which would guide the learners to develop to a stage where the learners build the necessary knowledge independently.

One of many examples of studies on scaffolding is the study by Belland, Glazewski and Richardson (2007) where problem-based learning was used as an approach with middle school students in order to help to build their critical reasoning skills. A small group of students were engage in an authentic, ill-structured problem. They have to understand the problem, develop a possible solution, provide evidence to support and present it. Various scaffolding methods were used to help these students. The study concluded that the output intent of scaffolding is to serve as a temporary support until students are able to accomplish scaffolding tasks by themselves. Scaffolding at the beginning stage was through teachers, peers or teaching materials where the students develop from a dependent to an independent stage in acquiring the knowledge.

Next, Communication Skills Development (CSD) system was used in a study by Planas and Nelson (2008) in developing the communication skills of the students. This system integrated self-directed learning activities, feedback and scaffolding strategies where it was shown to be effective in helping students recognize their strengths, areas in need of improvement, as well as implement and evaluate strategies to compare their communication skills. Over time, the amount of support, primarily peer feedback and laboratory instructor guidance, lessened as their communication skills developed. This pattern of participating at an ever-increasing level of competence while at the same time gradually withdrawing support as the learning process unfolds was an application of scaffolding to the CSD system. The outcome of the study showed that the scaffolding technique proof to be very successful. Here, a different technique was used to scaffold the students in order to develop their communication skills. As mentioned earlier, scaffolding was used in the learning process which was gradually reduced and at the end students were able to develop their communication skills.

In another study of grade four struggling readers and writers, Bryan and Christianson (2008) used scaffolding to develop their writing skills. They helped the students with a scaffolded writing experience through the notion of classroom community. Their study suggests that the scaffolding is entirely consistent with the notion of community where individual collaborate and assist one another. The scaffolding here is implemented through peer collaboration where the students help each other in developing their writing abilities and move to a stage of autonomous writers. The notion of classroom community is where the students in the class work as a community in order to help each other. The study used a poem as a based to scaffold the students in writing. The end result was actually very successful especially the scaffolding technique in the learning process. This is another scaffolding technique in developing students to become autonomous learners.

This scaffolding technique is supported by the findings by Vacca (2008) in his research. His research used scaffolding techniques to teach a social studies lesson about Buddha to sixth graders. He suggests teachers using scaffolding as an instructional technique to model the desired learning strategies or tasks for the students throughout the lesson. They should also teach the students to comprehend the relevant information in levels or stages of comprehension that will then gradually shift responsibility of learning about the concept from the teachers to the students. His suggestion shows scaffolding does help the students become autonomous learners. His instruction starts from high level of teacher interaction with students in guiding reading skills with students and leaving the students to participate in small-group interaction. This clearly shows the core idea of scaffolding as seen in other studies above as to gradually shift the learning process from teacher centered learning to more autonomous student centered learning.

The studies mentioned above are examples of scaffolding techniques used in the learning process in developing communication skills, reading and comprehension, and writing. The studies above also show that scaffolding can be used in developing many learning processes and language skills. The major concern would be the language development process through scaffolding. The process begins with the teacher or controlled learning environment controlling the learning process. Then it goes on to the next stage where the teacher only guides or provides partial guidance to the students or by gradually encouraging peer collaboration. Later the learning process is handed over to the students where they have to develop the necessary skills themselves in the specific area. This is where the learning takes place through discovery resulting from the investigation made by the students and now the learners become autonomous learners. The autonomous learners are the ideal aim of scaffolding.

II. Objectives

The objectives of this study are to:

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a) Evaluate the effectiveness of scaffolding strategy in journal writing amongst the L2 undergraduate university college students.

b) Analyze the progress of the L2 university college students in using accurate grammar through the application of scaffolding strategy when writing journals.

III. Research Questions

a. Is there a significant effect in the use of scaffolding to improve the journal writing skills among university college students?

b. How may the notions of scaffolding contribute to the development of journal writing amongst the L2 university college students?

c. To what extend the effect of scaffolding technique have on the ability of the L2 university college students' grammar accuracy when writing journals?

IV. Methodology

In this project, the study is primarily designed to look at how second language learner's have acquired the use of English language grammar through journal writing abilities and how they have improved within a short time frame. The researcher scaffold a number of 3 undergraduate university college students by using several interactive writing techniques and instructions in writing a journal which showed their progress, daily activities and new experiences. The writing errors mainly from parts of speech of the samples of written journals during week 1 were as it was written before and during the scaffolding period. Then the researcher compared the sample of written journals of week 1 to week 5. Data were collected and the results of the progression were obtained based on the observation and comparison of written journals on week 1 and 5.

A. Participants

3 international undergraduate university college students who are studying intensive English and in their second semester of the business foundation programme in one of the International College in Malaysia were selected as respondents. They are learning to write journals among other academic writing exercises. Prior to starting this semester, these students had completed a previous English writing course which entails a major portion of reading exercises and other approaches to writing. These journals must reflect their academic progress through the weeks of attending lectures and classroom participation. At the same time, students were also encouraged to write about how they developed and improved certain skills, support from classmates and how well they could cope with instructions from the teacher. Throughout the semester, students are required to write a total of seven journals. The first journal was written after completing the first week of classroom learning, activity and participation.

The teacher would provide a format and require the students to hand in their assignments by the end of each week. Sufficient time is given for the student to discuss in class and seek assistance from the teacher. Some of the students submitted drafts for correction and after being reviewed by the teacher they would submit a final copy. The last journal is written and submitted at the end of week 5.

B. Instrument

The researcher used five steps to scaffold the students towards completing the journal writing process. The steps are as follows:

1. Checklist for journal writing
2. Draft 1
3. Formulation for journal 1
4. Teacher assistance with correction
5. Sharing

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TABLE 1.
CHECKLIST FOR JOURNAL WRITING

	X	Does the task :
1		Require the writer to compose
2		Establish clear purpose of communicating ideas
3		Motivate the writer to communicate their knowledge
4		Reflect kind of writing normally required for academic purposes
5		Provide a subject of interest
6		Present a topic about yourself
7		Use appropriate words
8		Present a legible and readable topic
9		Present the correct mode of sentence construction
10		Give clear and concise approaches for future writing
11		Provide evidence for peer support
12		Allow writer to express freely

C. Evaluation

In evaluating, the writing task the teacher had considered planning, idea generation, grammar and emphasis on review. When looking closely at the grammar used by the participants, as this was one of the focus of instruction and research, then we viewed this task as purely a grammatical exercise. Two particular areas that we had derived from the scripts were the use of tenses and vocabulary. In most instances, three to five different verbs were used; there were also subject/verb agreement errors and spelling errors by some of the participants. In some cases, there were different verbs used instead of actual words thus showing difference in meaning. The participants had accustomed to using such verbs but not aware of the wrong usage.

In the case of vocabulary, nouns were frequently misspelled, articles often incorrectly placed and little use of adjectives. Many participants had used the same set of words repeatedly in their writing. Despite the use of simple words, when combining to form sentences the meaning that is supposed to be delivered had gone astray. A short clear sentence would have delivered the message with an appropriate choice of vocabulary. Nevertheless, many participants relied on the teacher for support and after correction they were able to present a better piece of paper. It is quite evident that after scaffolding, either grammatically or structurally, the second language learner had acquired the sense of correcting their own work through the editing process or helping in peer edition. In some cases there were clear cases of improvement in the usage of the language by the learner.

V. RESULTS

At the end of the fifth week, after the teacher Scaffold the students in journal writing, all of the students were at an improved level where they construct more grammatical sentences, seldom make grey errors, writing a complete and structured sentences, make less frequent repetition of same vocabulary, less errors in punctuation, make little spelling mistakes, able to relate the ideas and form a coherency in writing in comparison to their journal written on week 1.

It is proven to be true that with scaffolding, by the teacher's intervention the students were moved from zone of current development to a zone of proximal development. Beside that the students were able to use the correct time tenses, appropriate use of verbs and adjective and since its journal writing, they were able to reflect and recall the events they experienced earlier and put their progress in written form. After the teacher's intervention to facilitate the students with process writing, now they were able to write effective paragraphs. There are clear thesis statements and topic sentences. Students were able to meet one of the objectives of journal writing that is to provide relevant supporting details as well as interesting introduction and conclusion. It is clear that scaffold is necessary and the students need to be guided step by step to write the journal as to represent their experiences .Most of the students attempted to write on their own, and were independent in learning. They were excited about peer evaluation and discussion during the brainstorming session seems to be very effective and finally towards the end of week 5 they expects very little scaffold by the teacher and were more autonomous in learning.

The table 2 below shows the decrease in the number of mistakes made by the students during pre test (before scaffold) and post test (after scaffold)

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Parts Of Speech	Number of mistakes in week 1			Number of mistakes in week 5		
	Sample 1	Sample 2	Sample 3	Sample 1	Sample 2	Sample 3
SVA	4	0	2	0	0	2
Noun	3	1	0	1	2	0
Pronoun	9	0	4	1	4	1
Time tenses	18	5	4	9	2	6
Perfect tenses	6	1	0	3	1	1
Prepositions	5	0	3	6	4	6
Gerund	1	0	1	0	0	3
Adjective	4	2	2	1	1	3
Verb	6	5	4	6	6	1
Articles	8	5	2	5	4	3
Vocabulary	2	1	8	1	0	2
Spelling	2	1	0	0	0	0
Sentence structure	2	1	0	1	0	1
Total Mistakes	68	20	30	32	24	27

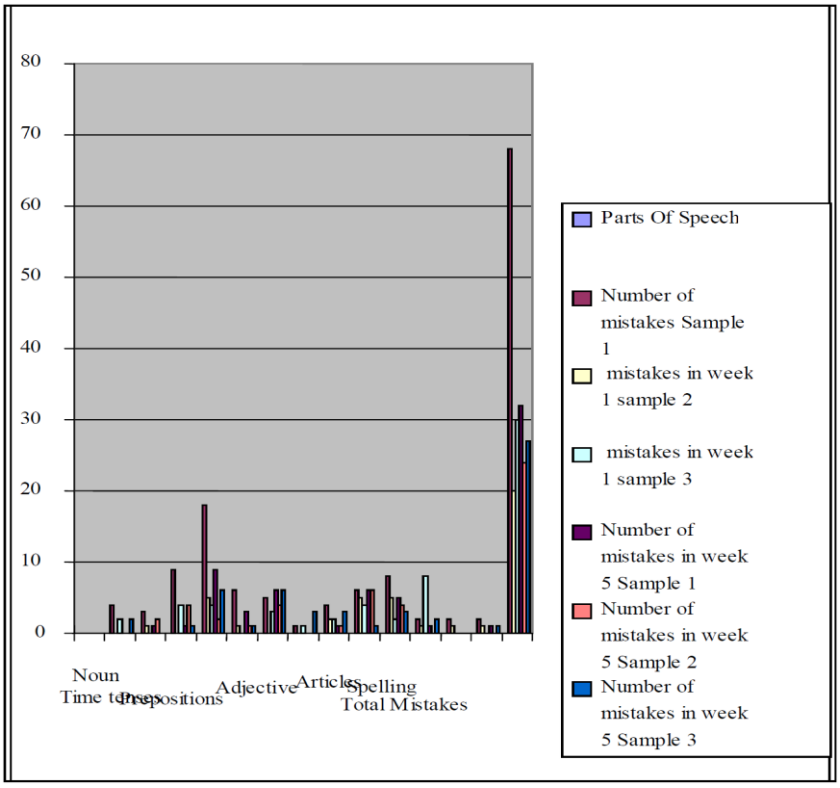

Figure 2 shows the distribution of grammar mistakes made by students in week 1 and 5

VI. Discussion

For the learners to improve their journal successfully, the teacher helped learners develop strategies they can apply to solve problems they encounter in writing For example, when a student is confronted by an unknown word, rather than telling the word, the teacher scaffold problem solving by prompting the student to use strategies within his or her range, such as using dictionaries to find proper vocabulary and meaning. Eventually, the student's no longer needs the teacher's help and can activate the necessary strategy by themselves.

Based on the results, we cannot generalize that the scaffolding strategy is effective to all the samples as if we see sample 2 made only 20 mistakes in week 1 but the number of mistakes increased to 24 in week 5. At the same time sample 1 made 68 mistakes in week 1 but significantly showed a decrease in the number of mistakes made in week 5 by only 32 mistakes. Meanwhile, sample 3 shows an improvement in the end of week 5 by making only 27 mistakes compare to the pre test where there was 30 identified mistakes.

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Writing a daily journal when produced by assistance, the students' progress was demonstrated in the use of more advanced appearing forms of writing, increased use of invented spelling, and increased length and quality of the messages. The difference between unassisted writing and Scaffold writing varied between individual students indicating the differences in their zones of proximal development. Scaffold writing followed the predicted path of all scaffolding; it began with assistance by another person, was eventually appropriated or used by the student with little outside support, and later became unnecessary as they reach their zone of proximal development. After the scaffolds were stopped in stages in five weeks, the performance remained at a higher level and there was little regression to earlier level and less mistakes were made compare to week 1.The details of one student's writing deterioration even after the teachers' scaffolding was not present and nor provided in this study as writing a journal is a continuous process and more time is needed to observe the students progress in the following weeks.

VII. Conclusion

In conclusion, we suggest that Scaffold writing provides educators with tool to examine students' learning of literacy skills and it is an effective way to support journal writing to students with low English language proficiency. As a research tool, Scaffold writing makes it possible to establish and shift student's language development from CPD to ZPD when the lower level is determined by the child's unassisted learning as seen in Zone of current development during week 1 and the teacher's assisted learning which then shifts to students' autonomous learning. The conclusion of this study supports that scaffolding technique would help students develop themselves and become autonomous learners. In sum, the scaffolding technique presented in this study has helped remedy the challenges faced by the target students by further developing the effectiveness in journal writing.

In order to get rid of the perception that poor writers will always remain poor, an educator can use Scaffolding that allows the teacher to help students transition from assisted tasks to independent performances. It is a step-by-step process that provides the learner with sufficient guidance until the process is learned, and then gradually removes the supports in order to transfer the responsibility for completing the task to the student. For scaffolding to be successful, the teacher must provide students with the optimal amount of support necessary to complete the task, and then progressively decrease the level of assistance until the student becomes capable of completing the activity independently.

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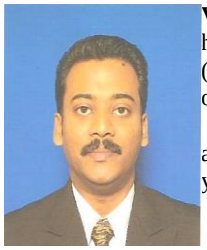

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The Effect of Teaching Strategic Competence on Speaking Performance of EFL Learners

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***Abstract*—Communicative strategies have always been of much concern to applied linguists. Whether teaching communicative strategies has any significant impact on second language learners' speaking or not has also controversial among language teachers. This study aimed at investigating the effect of explicit teaching of some of the communicative strategies (CSs) on language performance of Iranian language learners of English. It was also an attempt to study the stability of teaching CSs. The participants of the study were 60 male and female language learners. The experimental group received a 10-week-treatment on CSs. The data were gathered through three oral production tests consisting of the same tasks including group discussion, story retelling, and picture description. The data were analyzed through descriptive and inferential statistics (Chi-square test). The results of the study indicated that there was significant difference between control and experimental groups in the use of CSs; whereas, the results of the first posttest showed that there was a significant difference between the groups in the use of seven out of the nine strategies. Moreover, the results indicated that the effect of teaching CSs was stable even after a long interval.**

***Index Terms*—teaching communication strategies, teaching stability, Iranian language learners, speaking proficiency**

One of the most important and at the same time controversial issues over the past few decades has been teachability of communication strategies (CSs). Most experienced teachers believe that a prevalent problem that a lot of language teachers and learners face is learners' reluctance to participate in conversations and other speech events. Hence, they would rather shift to their native language to get their messages across or try to be silent which leads to a communication break. Although this disinclination can be attributed to such affective factors as lack of motivation or self-confidence and embarrassment or to such external factors like impractical language teaching methods and materials, it can mostly be the result of lack of communicative strategies necessary for L2 speakers when faced with communication problems. Therefore, this study is an attempt to find out whether CSs can be taught or not. Moreover, it aims at specifying the durability and stability of CSs after the treatment. In doing so the following research questions were raised.

1. What is the effect of teaching strategic competence on speaking performance of Iranian English language learners?
2. Is the effect of teaching communicative competence stable after a long time?

I. Literature Review

Communication strategies are defined as the techniques used by the learners when there is a gap between their knowledge of the language and their communicative intent (Wenden, 1986). What kind of problems can a speaker encounter? The following figure shows a diagram which is adopted from a well-known study by Farch & Kasper (1983).

Quite a few empirical investigations (to name just a few, Selinker, 1972; Varadi, 1973; Tarone, 1977) have been carried out to study the effectiveness of teaching CSs. Although these studies have been done in various languages by different people, they were aimed at the verification of successfulness or unsuccessfulness of teachability of CSs (Dornyei, 1995). Also, Savignon (1972) reported on a pioneering language teaching experiment involving a communicative approach, which, for the first time, included student training in CSs (or, as she termed them coping strategies) . Palmer (1981) noticed that some subjects with obviously limited grammatical structures and vocabularies described the pictures in terms of their placement on the page, in terms of how dark or light they are, or how big or small. These subjects appear to have adopted the strategy of ignoring the propositional content of the pictures and communicating instead about the nonverbal visual (the lines and shapes) used to represent them. Since these early studies, much research has been done to identify and classify CSs; however, far less attention has been paid to the question of whether these strategies could be integrated into second or foreign language teaching programs. In other words, to date, not many have investigated explicit teachability of communication strategies.

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The review of literature indicates that there is no general consensus on teaching oral communication strategies and the results reported have been rather mixed (Mc Donough, 2006). Generally speaking, there are two broadly diverging schools of thoughts on CSs (McDonough, 2006). One approach lays more emphasis on the cognitive processes involved in selecting one or another strategy, and proponents of this approach (to name just a few, Bialystok, 1990; Konishi & Tarone, 2004) argue that cognitive processes are not influenced by instruction and because CSs are part of cognitive processes, they are not teachable. The proponents of the other approach (e.g. Dörnyei, 1995; Konishi & Tarone, 2004; Lam, 2005), however, put emphasis on the linguistic expressions used in identifying types of CSs, and believe in the necessity of teaching these linguistic expressions or communicative strategies needed for effective L2 communication language use. The review of literature indicated that several interventionist studies, although insufficient and small, have been carried out to delve into the nature of teaching communication strategies. The recent ones are reviewed in the following parts.

Dornyei (1995) relates a pilot 6-week training experiment with 109 students in Hungary in the use of three CSs namely topic avoidance and replacement, circumlocution, using fillers and hesitation devices. The findings indicated that there was improvement in the use of CSs related to both the quality of circumlocutions and the frequency of the fillers and circumlocutions in the oral post-test consisting of topic description, cartoon description, and definition formulation. Dörnyei's (1995) study illuminates the views that CSs may be teachable and that patterns of students' strategy use may be significantly changed by instruction.

Salamone and Marsal (1997) report an experiment which aimed to investigate the impact of communication strategy instruction on two intact French classes of 12 undergraduates each. The treatment class received instruction in the use of circumlocution as well as strategies to cope with lexical difficulties, and the comparison class served as a control class. All participants completed pre- and posttest that elicited explanations of concrete nouns, abstract nouns, and shapes. The findings showed that both groups showed significant improvements over time, but there were no significant statistical differences between the two classes in the post-test. The tests administered in this study were, however, written rather than oral. This puts the validity of employing a written test to assess the impact of CSs for oral communication into question.

Scullen and Jourdain (2000) examined the effect of the explicit teaching of oral circumlocution on undergraduate learners studying French as a foreign language in an American university. The treatment group was explicitly taught to use super-ordination, analogy, function, and description strategies immediately prior to the first, the second and the third practice sessions, respectively. The Participants in both control and experimental groups completed a pre-test, three practice sessions, and a post-test. The results indicated that both the treatment and control classes made significant gains in successful identification over time, but the between-group difference on the post-test was not significant. Given the short period of training and the small group sizes, further investigation is no doubt desirable.

Rossiter (2003) reports the effects of communication strategy instruction on strategy use and on second language performance. Two classes of adult immigrants in Canada participated in this study. One class received 12 hours of direct communication strategy training, and the second served as a comparison group. Two oral tasks (picture story narratives, object descriptions) were administered in Week 1, Week 5, and Week 10. The post-test results showed a direct effect in favor of the communication strategy condition on a range of strategies used in the object description task, which was more effective than the narrative in eliciting communication strategies. Nonetheless, the author concludes that strategy training appeared to have little impact on learners in terms of task performance.

Regarding the effects of communicative strategy training on language performance, Nakatani's (2005) study produced rather different findings from Rossiter's (2003). Nakatani (2005) focuses on awareness-raising training in oral communication strategy use. In this experiment, the subjects, being 62 Japanese female learners of English were involved and divided into the strategy training group and the control group. Over 12 weeks, the former received meta-cognitive strategy training whereas the latter received only the normal communication course. The strategy group was also taught CSs that could help students learn more of the language such as asking for clarification, checking for comprehension, and paraphrasing. The effects of training were assessed by speaking test scores, transcription the data from the tests, and retrospective protocol data for their task performance. The findings revealed that participants in the treatment group improved their oral proficiency test scores, but those in the control group did not.

II. Methodology

A. Participants

The participants of the study were 6o male and female Iranian learners of English with the age range of 18-20. They were all studying English in language institutes located in Yasuj city, the center of Kohgiluyeh & Buyerahmad Province in Iran. All participants were born in Iran, spoke Persian as their first language, didn't speak English out of classroom situation, and they had at least four semesters of formal language instruction. The subjects participated in English classes to enhance their conversational skills; however, they didn't take part in any other English classes. Most importantly, the subjects neither took any course of CS training nor encountered any teacher teaching CSs, and any materials involving CSs; although, perhaps indirectly, unintentionally, and unconsciously, they in their language and interlanguage experience gained some CSs of which they were not informed in a specialized and conscious manner. The

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participants were randomly divided in two groups. They were then randomly assigned into experimental and control groups.

B. Instruments

Undoubtedly one of the most important steps in this study was data collection. To do this, in this study some instruments including a pretest and posttest each consisting of the same number of tasks were used. The two tests were oral and measured speaking performance of the language learners. The reliability of the two tests was estimated through inter-rater reliability approach. That is, the speaking performance of the participants and the CSs used in their speaking was evaluated by two different raters. The coefficient correlation between the ratings of the two raters in both tests exceeded .8 which is an acceptable index for reliability. Each test consisted of the same types of tasks which will be explained separately in the following sections.

C. Tasks

One of the most significant steps taken in this study was specifying some tasks which were done by the participants in order to make them produce themselves orally. Not any task was appropriate for our project because we needed those tasks which could pave the way for elicitation of CSs to a large extent. Although there have been a lot of tasks produced by various researchers in this realm, and although most of them were found working, we tried to select those whose degree of comprehensiveness seemed a bit more than the rest. Moreover, to avoid complexities of the study, we decided to choose just three of these tasks known as: (a) group discussion (b) retelling Persian short stories in English, and (c) picture description.

D. Data Analysis

The data of the study were analyzed through different statistical procedures including descriptive and inferential statistics. As we were concerned with frequency of communicative strategies in the participants' oral production, the best statistical test is a nonparametric Chi-square test. In this study, we had three tests pretest, posttest 1 and posttest2. The results for each test are presented in the following sections.

III. RESULTS

A. Results and Discussion of the Pretest

The purpose of the pretest was to confirm that there was no initial difference in the use of each communicative strategy by the participants of the study. The results are presented in table 1 & 2.

TABLE 1:
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR THE PRETEST

Groups	Frequency of Communicative Strategies								
	A	AP	R	LS	WC	AS	C	S.repe.	S.repa.
Experimental	230	280	156	466	124	262	178	198	112
Control	230	280	130	452	128	250	160	188	100

(A= avoidance, AP= approximation, R= restructuring, LS= language switch, WC= word coinage, AS= appeal for assistance, C= circumlocution, S.repe= self-repetition, and S.repa= self-repair)

TABLE 2:
CHI-SQUARE TESTS FOR EACH COMMUNICATIVE STRATEGY BY BOTH GROUPS

	Chi-square	Degree of freedom	Significance
Avoidance	.22	1	.63
Approximation	1.2	1	.5
Restructuring	.33	1	.45
Language switch	.78	1	.7
Word coinage	.36	1	.6
Appeal for assistance	.32	1	.66
Circumlocution	.49	1	.23
Self-repetition	.38	1	.18
Self-repair	.62	1	.40

As the results in table 2 indicate, there is no significant difference between frequencies of communicative strategies used in oral production by the participants of both groups. That is, they used the same number of communicative strategies.

B. Results of the First Posttest

The posttest was administered to measure the frequency of each communicative strategy in the oral production of the participants. The frequency of each CS and the inferential statistics (Chi-square) are presented in tables 3 & 4, respectively.

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TABLE 3:
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR THE POST-TEST

Groups	Frequency Communicative strategies								
	A	AP	R	LS	WC	AS	C	S.repe.	S.repa.
Experimental	74	298	114	112	100	470	284	478	160
Control	206	238	100	320	80	232	164	166	104

TABLE 4:
CHI-SQUARE FOR EACH COMMUNICATIVE STRATEGY BY BOTH GROUPS IN POSTTEST

	Chi-square	Degree of freedom	Significance
Avoidance	92	1	.000
Approximation	6.7	1	.000
Restructuring	.9	1	.33
Language switch	100	1	.000
Word coinage	2.2	1	.13
Appeal for assistance	80	1	.000
Circumlocution	90	1	.000
Self-repetition	101	1	.000
Self-repair	11	1	.001

The main purpose of teaching was to help the participants of the study to decrease two of the communicative strategies: avoidance and language switch but to increase the use of the other seven strategies. More specifically, the participants were trained to replace avoidance with appeal for assistance either directly or indirectly. As Table 3 shows, the participants in the experimental group used avoidance strategy 73 times but the control group members used this strategy 206 times. The results of Chi-square test (X2= , d,f=1, sig.= .000) also confirmed that there was a significant difference between the use of this strategy by the two groups. Due to the significant difference between the use of this strategy in the pretest and the posttest, it could be strongly discussed that teaching could significantly influence the use of this strategy by Iranian EFL learners.

Language switch like avoidance strategy and unlike the other strategies was taught and the learners were expected to avoid this strategy in their oral productions. As expected, the results showed that there was a significant difference between the frequency of language switch use by experimental and control groups (X^2= 100, d,f=1, sig.= .000. The descriptive statistics in table 1 also indicates that, prior to the instruction, the participants in experimental group used language switch strategy 466 times; whereas, after the instruction the participants used this strategy 112 times.

Unlike the above mentioned strategies, we expected the learners to use the other communicative strategies in their oral productions as many times as they can. The results in table 4 indicates that the difference between the use of restructuring (X^2= .9, d,f=1, sig.= .33) and word coinage (X^2= 2.2, d,f=1, sig.= .12) by the participants of the study was not significant. Therefore, it could be strongly argued that these strategies are not teachable. Difficulty of the strategy, lack of enough practice, and teaching and learning related issues which are beyond the scope of this study may be the reasons for teaching inefficiency.

In terms of the use of approximation strategy, as expected, the results in table 4 indicate that there is a significant difference between the two groups (X^2= 6.7, d,f=1, sig.= .01) . That is, the experimental group outperformed the control group and in comparison with the pretest, they used this strategy in their oral production many times.

Furthermore, it could be said that appeal for assistance can be used directly or indirectly. As Tables 2 & 3 illustrate, both groups frequently used this strategy in their productions. Undoubtedly, the use of this strategy is resulted from the curious nature of human beings. However, we attempted to make the participants aware of the significance of this strategy through treatment. Even though both groups used this strategy many times, the results of inferential statistics in table 3 shows a significant difference between the use of this strategy by the two groups (X^2= 100, df=1, sig.=.000). That is, the experiment group outperformed the control group and it could be discussed that teaching can influence the use of this strategy by language learners to a great extent.

Finally, the significant difference between the use of circumlocution(X^2= 100, df=1, sig.=.000) confirms that the participants were able to describe the target word in English though they could not express the object itself. Also, the difference between the uses of self-repetition by the two groups verifies that after the treatment the participants in the experimental group did their best to use this strategy whenever they could not remember the intended words. It could also be discussed that language themselves whenever they made mistakes in their production. Therefore, in line with Palmer (1990) it could be discussed that CSs should be taught to language learners so that they can have a better effective communication.

C. Results of the Second Posttest

The second posttest consisting was administered to only experimental group to investigate whether teaching CSs has a long lasting effect or not. The frequency of each communicative strategy used by the participants was counted and compared with the frequencies of CSs in the first posttest. The results are shown in tables 5 & 6, respectively.

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TABLE 5:
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR THE EXPERIMENTAL GROUP POSTTESTS 1 & 2

Tests	Frequency Communicative strategies								
	A	AP	R	LS	WC	AS	C	S.repe.	S.repa.
Posttest 1	74	298	114	112	100	470	284	478	160
Posttest 2	70	160	120	160	97	380	270	460	153

TABLE 6:
CHI-SQUARE FOR COMPARING THE CONTROL GROUP'S USE OF CSS IN POSTTES1 & 2

	Chi-square	Degree of freedom	Significance
Avoidance	.92	1	.31
Approximation	60	1	.000
Restructuring	.9	1	.33
Language switch	66	1	.000
Word coinage	2.2	1	.13
Appeal for assistance	80	1	.000
Circumlocution	6	1	.32
Self-repetition	76	1	.000
Self-repair	4	1	.13

The results of the study in table 6 indicate that there was a significant difference between the use of approximation ($X^2_=$ 60, sig.=.000), appeal for assistance ($X^2_=$ 80, sig.=.000) and self-repetition($X^2_=$ 70, sig.=.000). Moreover, the results indicate that there is a significant difference in the use of language switch strategy in the first and the second posttests ($X^2_=$ 66 sig.=.000). However, as it can be seen from table 6, there is no difference between the frequencies of the other strategies in both posttests.

IV. DISCUSSION

In order to obtain empirical data regarding the potential usefulness of CS instruction, an experiment was carried out, focusing on nine different types of strategies. The results of the first post tests showed improvement in quantity of CS use by the participants of the experimental groups. In other words, in seven out of nine CSs the treatment group outperformed the non-treatment group. The significance difference between both groups provided evidence that the increase in the frequency of almost all CSs – avoidance, approximation, language switch, appeal for assistance, circumlocution, self-repair, self-repetition- could indeed be attributed to the treatment. This finding is in line with the findings of Palmer (1990); however, the same thing cannot be generalized to restructuring and word coinage which seem to have resulted from the natural difficulty hidden in these two strategies. Consequently, regarding question 1, the study has provided evidence to support the value of CS instruction and the experimental group did better than the comparison group on the strategies elicited from the participants' oral production in the expected tasks namely: group discussion, story-retelling, and picture description. The results of the first pos-test; therefore, suggest that CS instruction might have a positive effect on enhancing learners' performance. And finally in reply to research question 1, as mentioned above, it could be firmly argued that teaching CSs has a positive effect on language performance of Iranian learners' of English.

Regarding research question 2, which aimed at evaluating the stability of the CSs, findings from the second posttest indicate that a three-month interval had different impacts on the frequency of strategy use by the participants of the treatment group. In other words, the second post-test was administered to test the extent to which the target CSs remain stable after the expected duration. The results show that the nine communicative strategies, on the basis of their stability after the treatment, could be divided into three categories.

a) Three of the communicative strategies namely approximation, appeal for assistance, and self-repetition had turned out to be significantly different from their corresponding items in the post-test taken by the control group; whereas, in the second post-test and after the interval they lost their effect and frequency of their use seemed to decrease rapidly. It could be argued that language learners need repeated training and awareness about these three strategies. There may be some other influential factors which need further exploration.

b) Language switch with a high frequency of use in the participants' production and also with a significant difference from the control group in the first post-test not only had great stability but it was also increasingly used by the participants after the interval. It is thought that the increase in the use of such strategy by the expected participants is the high exposure to the native language of learners.

c) Five of the strategies namely avoidance, restructuring, word coinage circumlocution, and self-pair (restructuring and word coinage were not differently used by control and experimental groups) had neither decline nor increase after the duration. To simply put, it could be argued that teaching these five strategies has stable effects on the learners' oral production.

According to the findings obtained from the first posttest compared with those in the second posttest, we can conclude that four out of the seven strategies which were significantly different in control and experimental groups were

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stable. Taking the abovementioned results gained from the first and the second posttest into account, it could be argued that CS instruction seems promising. Moreover; the findings of the present study has thrown light on the implementation of CS instruction in communicative situations of ESL classroom. Firstly, this study has sought to emphasize awareness-raising and CS use in challenging situations in order to assist learners to prevent interruption in communication events. Secondly, the frequency of strategy use can remain stable even when training and practice of these strategies have stopped.

However, the findings of this study are to some extent different from those of the previous researchers who have worked on the teachabilty of communicative strategies. As it was mentioned in review of literature of this study, there are two broadly diverging schools of thoughts on CSs. One approach focuses on the cognitive processes involved in selecting one or another strategy, and proponents of this approach including Bialystock (1990) believe that cognitive processes are unaffected by instruction and because CSs are part of cognitive processes, they are not teachable. The other approach, however, focuses on the linguistic expressions used in identifying types of CSs, and proponents of this approach (Konishi & Tarone, 2004; Lam, 2005) advocate the necessity to teach these linguistic expressions or communicative strategies needed for effective L2 communication language use.

It could be finally discussed that t both of the above mentioned points of view are right. On the one hand the first view claims that these are cognitive processes that select various types of the communicative strategies and the proponents of this view believe that cognitive processes are unaffected by instruction. This belief is right because before teaching communicative strategies, in both treatment and no-treatment conditions the learners' production in the pre-test showed the existence of these strategies. In other words; the participants used various types of communicative strategies before any teaching. On the other hand, the views which focus on the teachability of communicative strategies are right. The truth of this idea results from the findings of the first posttest.

Accordingly, both viewpoints are right. But the difference is that the proponents of the first view adheres to the cognitive nature of the strategies and ignores the external attempts for the consciousness-raising of these strategies. The question which could be raised concerning teachability of CSs is that if a process is cognitive, does it necessarily mean that it cannot be raised consciously? As a final point, instruction can be defined as turning unconsciousness into consciousness. Definitely, either unconsciously or consciously learners use communicative strategies, but explicit instruction of these strategies makes the learners conscious and also stabilizes the use of these strategies when essential.

V. Implications

This study has both theoretical and practical implications. Theoretically speaking, this study will reveal the effect of teaching communicative strategies on language performance of language learners in general and Iranian foreign language learners in particular. Among all communicative strategies investigated in this study are avoidance, approximation, restructuring, language switch, word coinage, appeal for assistance, circumlocution, self-repetition, self-repair. On the whole, in the present study, one theoretical question to which great importance is attached is whether communicative strategies can be instructed explicitly or not. It is argued that even the most hardworking teachers spending lot of time on task cannot guarantee learners' achievement in communication. The steps taken are good, but they are not adequate to get language learners out of challenging communicative situations. Similarly, this study is theoretically significant in because it examines the effect of communicative strategies instruction on language performance of language learners. The findings of this study would be helpful for language learning theorists in that they would be familiar with the role of communicative strategies in learning English as a foreign language and they would be able to develop new theoretical ideas for favorable performance.

Pedagogical Implications

Undoubtedly, finding some strategies and procedures for acceptable communication has always been of interest for teachers, syllabus designers, and textbook and curriculum designers. It is hoped that the insights gained from this study can pave the ground for producing invaluable information for devising appropriate materials and effective teaching techniques suitable for different groups of learners at various stages of language learning. Based on the findings of the study, several recommendations for teaching English as a foreign language can be made. First, the present study demonstrates that including CS in SL materials especially textbooks and also devoting vigorous exercises to these strategies, teaching and practicing them in a special time of the classroom and most importantly equipping SL/FL learners with these CSs, can pave the ground for fruitful results. Undoubtedly, using these CSs by learners let them get out of difficult communicative situations.

Second, just hardworking on the part of language teachers without the inclusion of some of constructive strategies cannot solve the problem of disinclination of language learners in communicative events and those who are in charge of language instruction should keep in mind that one of the most important factor whose presence is fully essential in language teaching and learning is the instruction of communicative strategies and involving learners in practicing and using these strategies in their language production.

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